

Syria to free 5,000 under amnesty bill

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syria is preparing to free more than 5,000 prisoners under an amnesty bill presented to parliament last week by President Hafez Al Assad, officials said Monday. "If the law is approved without amendments, more than 5,000 prisoners sentenced before November 1995 will be freed," an official said, adding that 13,600 people in total were held in the country's jails. The official, who said Syria had "several dozen political prisoners, including around 20 members of the (banned) Muslim Brotherhood," indicated that most of those freed would be prisoners jailed for economic crimes. The proposed amnesty was presented to parliament on Thursday to mark Mr. Assad's 25th anniversary of his accession to power. The new bill, which focuses on economic crimes including those involving foreign currency, envisages reducing life sentences handed down by economic security courts to 20 years of hard labour. Syria freed 1,200 political prisoners, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood and supporters of the jailed communist leader Riad Al Turk, under an amnesty in November.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily
by Jordan Press Foundation

جريدة تأييز يومية مستقلة عربية



Yasser Arafat begins Gulf tour

DOHA (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat arrived here Monday for his first tour of the Gulf Arab states since he infuriated them by supporting Iraq during the 1990-1991 Gulf war. The official Qatar News Agency said Mr. Arafat, president of the autonomous Palestinian Authority (PNA), was welcomed by the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani, and senior Qatari officials. Sheikh Hamad and Mr. Arafat will study "ways to activate bilateral cooperation and the Middle East peace process," the Palestinian representative here, Yassin Al Sharif, told the press. Mr. Arafat on Sunday welcomed the scheduled restart of the frozen peace talks between Syria and Israel on 27. Mr. Arafat is due next in Abu Dhabi for talks with the president of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, authorities said. Doha announced in October the establishment of a holding company capitalised at \$250 million designed to invest industrial projects in the autonomous Palestinian areas. The UAE has said it would finance the construction of homes and subsidise the medical needs of Palestinians.

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Peres unveils negotiating points accepted by Assad

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres said Monday that Syria had agreed to a nine-point programme for negotiations which could produce a final peace agreement before Israeli elections in October.

Speaking to a closed-door session of his Labour Party group in parliament, Mr. Peres said the negotiating principles had been accepted by Syrian President Hafez Al Assad as the basis for talks to begin next week, according to deputies who attended the meeting.

He said a tenth point proposed a summit meeting with Mr. Assad, but was not accepted by the Syrian leader.

"There is an exceptional opportunity to make peace with Syria," he was quoted as telling the Labour members of the parliament, or Knesset.

"We have 10 months until the elections. If it is possible to reach a good agreement, there is no reason not to go ahead with it before the elections," he said. "I can't remember a time when Syria is as much in favour of peace as

today." The prime minister said his proposals were relayed to Mr. Assad by U.S. President Bill Clinton and formed the basis for the Israeli-Syrian agreement, announced Saturday, to launch wide-ranging peace talks next week at a sealed location near Washington.

Among the ideas, Mr. Peres said the offer of a summit meeting with Mr. Assad "was a proposal and not a precondition" for talks.

Among the nine points accepted by Mr. Assad were talks on "finding ways to turn the Golan Heights into a centre of economic cooperation instead of a battlefield," Mr. Peres said.

Responding to reports that he had already offered a return of the Golan to Syria, Mr. Peres said, "I have committed myself to no territorial concessions. If concessions are needed, I will inform the Knesset."

Mr. Peres was quoted by a senior aide as telling the Knesset foreign and defence affairs committee earlier Monday that Israel could agree to an accelerated withdrawal from the Golan as part of a peace deal with Syria.

Mr. Peres said another proposal was that "calm must be observed along the Israeli-Lebanese border."

The senior official said this

(Continued on page 7)

Sheikh Sabah retracts resignation submitted in dispute over Jordan

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, who had announced he was resigning after a clash with the prime minister, withdrew his decision at the request of the emir on Monday.

"On the instructions of Emir Jaber (Al Ahmad Al Sabah)... I will continue my activities to serve the interests of my country and my people," Sheikh Sabah told journalists after a meeting with the ruler of Kuwait.

In an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper Al Qabas published earlier the same day, he said that "differences over foreign policy" had prompted his resignation.

"I don't think I'll reconsider my decision," he said, adding the resignation was banded in during a meeting of the cabinet on Sunday.

A government official who requested anonymity said Sheikh Sabah left the government meeting and handed in his resignation after Sheikh Saad criticised him for telling reporters that ties with Jordan would be normalised.

Sheikh Sabah had proposed submitting the issue to a government vote, but the prime minister decided to pass it on to the emir, cutting the conversation short and forcing the foreign minister to leave the meeting, the official said.

Diplomats here said Sheikh Sabah favoured a rapprochement with countries such as Jordan that were accused of supporting Iraq after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, while the prime minister remained strongly opposed.

Sheikh Sabah, keen both to isolate former occupier

Iraq and also keep Kuwait in the mainstream of Arab opinion, is in favour of restoring full relations with Jordan and also possibly Yemen.

But Sheikh Saad says such countries must do more to placate angry Kuwaiti opinion before any reconciliation can take place.

Sheikh Sabah, in his mid-60s, is one of the world's longest serving foreign ministers and is a half-brother of the emir. He has held his post since 1963 apart from a long break after the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

He is also deputy prime minister, chairman of the Higher Petroleum Council — the top body overseeing the broad strategy of the oil and petrochemical industries —

(Continued on page 7)

Communists leading Russian election, but West unalarmed

MOSCOW (R) — Communists emerged on Monday as the big winners in Russia's parliamentary election ahead of nationalists and the pro-government party, sending ripples of concern but no shockwaves abroad.

Cashing in on discontent with hardships under market reforms, the Communist Party led with 21.9 per cent of the votes after almost half the ballots had been counted from Sunday's election to the State Duma (lower house).

Ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), defying its critics, was on 11.1 per cent. Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's centre-right Our Home is Russia bloc was third with 9.6 per cent.

"This is a complete rejec-

tion of the old radical system. The system has collapsed and become bankrupt," Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov told a news conference.

"In fact, the government has received a vote of no-confidence," he declared, setting out plans for a coalition of opposition forces, a new economic policy and demands for changes in the government.

The vote signalled dissatisfaction with Western-style reforms which have made a few rich but brought unemployment, insecurity and no improvement in living standards for most of the nearly 150 million people in the vast country.

But a calm Western reaction reflected the belief that

there can be no return to the dark past which disappeared in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of more than 70 years on one-party rule.

Financial markets showed little alarm. Investors and market dealers said real power lies with the strong presidency under Russia's constitution, limiting the communists' hopes of forcing immediate changes of policy.

Mr. Zyuganov is seen as relatively moderate, but not in the same mould as the social democrats in power in Eastern Europe. Some party members are more conservative than Mr. Zyuganov, who wants more state control in the economy and some subsidised prices.

(Continued on page 7)

Bosnia peace operations pick up momentum

TUZLA (Agencies) — U.S. Air Force transport planes flying out of Aviano in Italy, landed at an airbase here Monday — the first to arrive in five days — kickstarting a stalled U.S. mission.

The planes flew in men and equipment based at the U.S. airbase at Vicenza, U.S. spokesman Major Garrie Dorman said.

Hampered by dense fog, U.S. forces have been unable for four days to fly into Tuzla, the command centre in northern Bosnia for the 20,000 U.S. soldiers who are to start enforcing the Bosnian peace treaty.

Maj. Dorman said 27 flights were planned through the day Monday with planes arriving every five or ten

minutes. As steady drizzle fell at the U.N.-run airbase in the Majevica hills near Tuzla, Maj. Dorman said it was a "huge relief" to have finally landed a plane after the problems of recent days.

The planes' arrival allows U.S. radar staff at Tuzla to calibrate the radar equipment at the Spartan airbase and should in theory mean that planes can fly in even if fog returns, radar operator Sergeant Perry Pennington said.

A formal transfer of authority from the United Nations to the NATO-led force in Bosnia is due to take place on Wednesday in Sarajevo, following the signing of the Bosnian peace treaty in Paris last week and U.N. and

NATO approval of the operation.

A first 130 U.S. ground troops moved down by rail and road Sunday from bases in Hungary to start preparing another route into Bosnia from Croatia via a pontoon bridge over the River Sava, for troops joining the Implementation Force (IFOR) for Bosnia.

British and French troops will take charge of the western and southern sectors of Bosnia under the operation Concurred Effort that is being organised. They will combine with the Americans and troops from 27 other nations to provide the NATO-led 60,000-strong IFOR.

The Bosnian Serb assem-

bly has given tacit endorsement to the U.S.-brokered peace accord for Bosnia, as well as the green light for NATO to deploy its forces on Bosnian Serb territory.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic finally reached a compromise deal on the peace accord from the parliament after a heated 12-hour debate Sunday.

The assembly was meeting in the former ski resort of Jahorina, near the Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale, to discuss the peace accord.

Sources close to the assembly said Mr. Karadzic succeeded in averting an overwhelming rejection of the peace accord by not putting it to a vote.

(Continued on page 7)

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Advertisement

On the occasion of its Thirty Second anniversary, Royal Jordanian Airline, has the pleasure to announce the introduction of a new service to facilitate the check-in process for passengers travelling to Amsterdam, New York, Chicago, London and Berlin will have the choice of obtaining their Boarding Pass as well as paying airport departure tax within 24 hours of scheduled departure time at our sales offices located in Al Abdali, Jabal Amman and Housing Bank, Commercial Centre - 1st floor.

ROYAL JORDANIAN

Setting New Standards

لهم امين

U.S. team praises political shifts in Palestinian scene

AMMAN (J.T.) — An international delegation organised jointly by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Carter Centre has concluded a second pre-election mission to review the Palestinian electoral process in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. After an intense week of observation and analysis, a statement by the joint mission said, the delegation was encouraged by the emerging focus of the political discussion on democratic procedures that has occurred in recent days among groups across the political spectrum. Despite a substantially compressed timetable, the registration process seems to have gone rather well, and the prospects for an election without violence or disruption have improved over the last month, "the peace process has permitted elections; in turn, it now appears that free elections could strengthen the peace process."

The delegation includes Ambassador Harry Barnes and Dr. Robert Pastor from the Carter Centre; Dr. Alex Grigoriev, former member of the Latvian Parliament; Dr. Mohammad Guezzous, leader of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces in Morocco; and Thomas O. Melia, Senior Associate at NDI. The delegation held meetings with Yasser Arafat and officials of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA); leaders of virtually all political parties and groups; journalists and human rights activists; civic leaders, domestic observers, candidates and election officials; and Israelis.

Following are major excerpts from the delegation's statement, a copy of which was sent to the Jordan Times yesterday:

Throughout the pre-election period, NDI and Carter Centre representatives based in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will continue to monitor preparations for the elections, voter and candidate registration, the campaign, political environment, media coverage of the elections, the role of security forces and voter education efforts. At the time of the elections, NDI and The Carter Centre will organise a multinational delegation of election and regional experts, elected officials, and political party leaders, led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The delegation was encouraged to hear Palestinian leaders, including those from Islamist groups, describe elections as the basis of political legitimacy and the key to long term stability. These leaders told us that they want the elections to proceed without disruption or violence, whether they eventually choose to participate or not. Chairman Arafat is presently engaged in a dialogue with

Egyptian actress runs afoul of lawyers for 'immoral' photo

CAIRO (AFP) — Two Muslim fundamentalist lawyers have launched legal proceedings against a well-known Egyptian actress for appearing "practically naked" in a photograph published in a film magazine.

Abdul Fatah Al Waraki and Ayman Abul Futuh told AFP on Sunday they want actress Yusra to go to prison

Islamist critics of the PNA and the Oslo accords that we hope will lead to their participation in the elections. We hope this dialogue may be expanded to other groups so as to integrate all Palestinians into a peaceful political process."

All political groups with whom the delegation spoke welcomed the presence of international observers as an essential element of these elections. This represents their recognition of the importance of a transparent and accountable electoral process and the positive role that the international community can play in reinforcing the process. We also note the importance of monitoring by impartial, civic-minded Palestinians as provided in the election law and the Interim Agreement, and we appeal to the PNA and the Central Election Commission (CEC) to facilitate their work.

For the electoral process to succeed, it is necessary that the PNA demonstrate greater respect for human rights, freedom of speech, and the rule of law. We are concerned about the serious reports of press censorship, arbitrary detention without due process, torture, and even deaths in detention. Many Palestinians also expressed their concern about the intrusion of a growing security apparatus into many aspects of civil society in a manner that inhibits debate and dissent.

The PNA needs to take immediate steps to dispel these fears and create an open environment more conducive to meaningful elections. Toward that end, we recommend the following:

— First, the Attorney General needs to respond fully to the requests of the Independent Commission on Human Rights and others for investigations of human rights violations.

— Second, the delegation recommends the establishment of a legal framework for independent radio and television and the modification of the Press Law of June 1995 to respect rather than inhibit freedom of the press and speech.

— Third, the encouraging recognition by the PNA of the need for access to the media for all candidates ought to be reinforced by timely publication and implementation of specific guidelines. It is essential that all candidates will have equitable access to the media to present their messages and that news programming by the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation will also reflect balance and fairness.

— Fourth, more broadly, PNA officials, including the security services, should take prompt steps to assure the public that the people's rights to express their views freely will not be infringed.

They are also bringing charges against the editor and two other employees of the magazine, Al Cinema Wal Nass, that published the picture.

The trial is to open Dec. 27.

for "breaching public morals" by appearing in a camisole in the photograph, published on Nov. 18.

They are also bringing charges against the editor and two other employees of the magazine, Al Cinema Wal Nass, that published the picture.

The trial is to open Dec. 27.

10 PNA ministers resign ahead of elections

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Ten ministers in Yasser Arafat's 18-member cabinet have resigned in order to run in the Palestinian general elections, one of the ministers confirmed Monday.

Mr. Arafat, meanwhile, formally registered his candidacy for president, so far the only contender for the job. Two others, a businessman and a social worker, have said they would challenge Mr. Arafat, but have not yet filed out the applications.

Palestinians have two votes in the Jan. 20 elections, one to select members of the 83-seat council that will administer the West Bank and Gaza Strip and a second for the president of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Unlike his ministers, Mr.

Ten members of Mr. Arafat's appointed cabinet submitted their resignations during a cabinet meeting Friday in the West Bank town of Nablus, but the move was only made public Monday.

Social Affairs Minister Intissar Wazir said Mr. Arafat asked her and the other nine ministers to stay on the job through Wednesday. After that, deputy ministers will be on the job through Wednesday. After that, deputy ministers will be in charge.

Mr. Arafat, sending a representative, had registered himself as candidate for president Sunday at the headquarters of the elections commission in the West Bank town of Jericho, said Abdul Nasser Mekki, director of the Jericho office.

Unlike his ministers, Mr.

Arafat was not required to resign from his post as head of the PNA in order to run.

Mr. Arafat's Fatah movement was to submit its candidates' lists for the 16 electoral districts last Thursday. However, there has been infighting over the selection of names, with local activists complaining that Mr. Arafat is trying to dictate who will run.

"The main reason for the delay is the conflict between what the people want and what the leadership wants," said Salah Tamari, a prominent Fatah member who is running in the Bethlehem district.

Elah Barghouti, spokesman for the elections commission, said Monday that the number of council members had been increased from

82 to 83 in order to give an assured seat to the Samaritans, a 600-strong sect whose followers split off from Judaism 2,800 years ago and now live in two communities in Israel and the West Bank.

Architect collects signatures

An architect in Hebron on the West Bank is collecting signatures to challenge Mr. Arafat in the presidential elections.

"Of course I want to win," said 40-year-old Ali Tamimi. "I'm for peace, a better economy and for a better life, especially a better life."

Dressed in suit and tie, Mr. Tamimi has been pounding the muddy streets of Hebron and knocking on doors to round up the 5,000 signatures he needs to challenge Mr. Arafat.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cyprus to court-martial soldier caught by Turkey

NICOSIA (R) — A Greek-Cypriot soldier just out of a jail in Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus will now be court-martialed by his superiors for fraternising with the enemy, defence sources said on Monday. A Defence Ministry source told Reuters George Karotsakis, 19, would appear before a military court soon to face charges of abandoning his post and fraternising with the enemy. The charges carry a maximum sentence of six months in jail. "The procedure has already started. He will be charged and court-martialed," the source said. Karotsakis, who was manning a National Guard post in a Nicosia suburb of capital Nicosia, strolled over to the Turkish sentry post opposite for a cigarette and chat with a Turkish soldier on Nov. 3 when he was caught. He was released month later.

Tonnes of Taliban munitions destroyed in blast

KABUL (AFP) — A massive blast has destroyed tonnes of ammunition held by the Taliban militia at a depot southwest of the besieged Afghan capital, defence ministry sources said Monday. About 50 truckloads of rockets, tank and artillery rounds and small arms ammunition were destroyed in the explosion in Taliban-held Wardak province late Saturday, they said. No independent confirmation of the explosion was immediately available. "It was a huge stockpile of ammunition which had been destined for the Taliban fighters battling our forces around Kabul," an official said. "This constituted a significant material loss to the enemy," he added, without specifying what caused the blast.

Iraq frees Saudi national — Red Cross source

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq has freed a Saudi national accused of entering the country illegally and sent him home under the auspices of the Red Cross, said a source at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on Monday. "We handed him (back)... it was done yesterday (Sunday)," said a source at the ICRC's Baghdad office.

Newspapers quoted a statement from Iraq's Foreign Ministry saying "the Saudi national, Hamid Inayaz Mohammad Al Utabi, was handed back to his country through the Iraqi border town of Safwan between Iraq and Kuwait." The Foreign Ministry statement said the Saudi was released in accordance with presidential decision No. 78 issued on Sept. 14, 1995 granting pardons to all Arabs jailed in Iraq. The Foreign Ministry statement said the Saudi was serving a two-year prison sentence for entering Iraq illegally. It made no mention of when the Saudi entered the country or when his sentence began.

Turkish police seize 80 kg of heroin

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Turkish police seized 80 kilograms of pure heroin hidden in compartments of a car here at the weekend, security officials said Monday. They said eight people, all Turks, were detained in connection with the incident. The heroin was destined for Western Europe, where it would have had a market value of about \$10 million. Police in Turkey, which is on a main drugs smuggling route from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran to Europe, seized more than two tonnes of heroin last year.

Lebanese premier wins French prize

PARIS (AFP) — President Jacques Chirac awarded a prestigious French prize to Lebanese Premier Rafik Hariri on Monday for "exemplary" work in promoting his country's development. The Prix Louise Michel was bestowed on Mr. Hariri during a ceremony at Mr. Chirac's residence, the Elysee Palace, which was followed by a private lunch, the French presidential press service said. The prize was in recognition of "exemplary action for Lebanon's good, which shows in what Lebanon has achieved under your authority and your unstinting energy," said Mr. Chirac, who himself won the Prix Louise Michel in 1986.

Court bans Somali daily from N. Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AFP) — The Islamic Sharieh court has banned circulation and sale of the influential daily newspaper Qaran in areas under its control in north Mogadishu, accusing it of publishing false information. The court's order, broadcast by the north Mogadishu radio on Monday, said those found selling or smuggling Qaran into north Mogadishu would be punished according to Islamic law. The ban followed the publication by the newspaper of a plane crash at Isleye airstrip in north Mogadishu which it attributed to a mine blast, but the report was later found to be false by reporters who rushed to the scene of the alleged accident. North Mogadishu is the stronghold of self-styled Somali interim President Ali Mahdi Mohammad's Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA), a bitter political opponent of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USCSNA) faction leader General Mohammad Farah Aideed, who controls south Mogadishu.

Policeman, militant chief killed in Egypt

MINYA (AFP) — A policeman and a militant chief were killed in a shootout Monday in a central square of Mallawi town, a flashpoint of extremist violence in south Egypt, police said. Ahmad Hassan Al Sayed, 23, was shot dead when three members of the Gamaa Islamiyah extremist group opened fire on a group of policemen in the town, 280 kilometres south of Cairo in Minya province. Police returned fire as they pursued the fleeing militants through the town. The military head of the Gamaa in Mallawi, Ismail Abdulla Ismail, was shot dead in the chase, police said. Another militant was wounded but managed to escape with his colleague into nearby sugarcane fields, which police surrounded and began searching.

Hamas leader's wife fears for his safety

NEW YORK (R) — The wife of the political leader of the Muslim fundamentalist group Hamas says her husband innocent of terrorism charges and fears for his safety if he is extradited to Israel.

"I fear him being sent to Israel because I don't believe he will get a fair trial. We know what goes on in the prisons of Israel," said Nadiya Al Ashi, wife of Musa Abu Marzouk, in her first interview since her husband's July arrest.

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They are also bringing charges against the editor and two other employees of the magazine, Al Cinema Wal Nass, that published the picture.

The trial is to open Dec. 27.

Zeroual warns rebels of full vigour of law

PARIS (R) — Algeria's President Liamine Zeroual vowed on Sunday to pursue the battle against militancy trying to overthrow him and to crack down with the full rigour of the law.

But in his first speech since being sworn in as president after last month's presidential election, he also recalled his offer of clemency — pardon or reduced sentence — to those who surrendered.

Addressing the judiciary at the start of their new session, Mr. Zeroual repeated that he wants to face trial on charges of complicity in 10 "terrorist attacks" carried out by Hamas, a group opposed to the Middle East peace process, and for numerous murders.

Mr. Abu Marzouk, 44, has lived in the United States for 14 years and won an immigration green card in a government lottery five years ago. He has not been charged with any crime but is being held at the Metropolitan Correctional Centre, a federal prison in Lower Manhattan, at Israel's request.

Mr. Abu Marzouk, 44, has lived in the United States for 14 years and won an immigration green card in a government lottery five years ago. He has not been charged with any crime but is being held at the Metropolitan Correctional Centre, a federal prison in Lower Manhattan, at Israel's request.

She said her children still have nightmares.

She also said an address book found during the search was not a list of suspected terrorists as alleged by the FBI.

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A few days ago I asked the nation to put all its energies into promoting the clemency offer. Today I ask the judiciary to be committed

to this enterprise... for the sake of reconciliation and national unity."

In his address, carried by the official Algerian news agency APS and broadcast on state radio, Mr. Zeroual, a former general, also promised to fight corruption, bureaucracy and regionalism.

These are among the main grievances of many of the country's 28 million people and a source of mistrust between them and the rulers.

Up to 40,000 people have been killed in Algeria's violence pitting guerrillas against army-backed government forces since early 1992 when authorities scrapped a general election which the Islamists were poised to win.

The president, suggesting clearly that guerrillas no longer had popular legitimacy since more than 61 per cent of voters had given him their support, said:

"Barbaric acts of terrorism are now judged for what they are — criminal acts perpetrated against all the nation, crimes which the nation has condemned without appeal, crimes which the state will fight without respite, crimes which Algerian justice must punish with all the rigour of the law."

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HOSPITALS



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday addresses the opening session of the 1995 International Conference on Electronics, Circuits and Systems (Petra photo)

Prince Hassan calls for addressing problems of information poverty

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday said most countries of the world were at the receiving end of development witnessed in the field of electronics.

At the opening session of the 1995 International Conference on Electronics, Circuits and Systems, Prince Hassan said the bulk of developing nations have missed out on opportunities to participate in the development process in this important field.

"It would be an understatement for us to say that it is timely for us to host such a conference in Jordan and the Middle East," Prince Hassan said.

Prince Hassan said participants in the four-day conference, who represent 39 countries, should contribute to evaluating the level of social awareness and the importance of accessibility to information.

"It is not just a question of carrying new toys, some of which look like pieces of modern furniture, but it is a qualitative step towards enhancing the process of

accountability for decision-making at various levels of society. It is a process of increasing cultural interaction among society through trans-border data information flow, within the context of the global village, once again, that quality of internationalisation. We are in associating ourselves and participating in the information age, contributing to global information transfer," he said.

The Crown Prince said there was uneven distribution of information resources between developed and developing countries, describing this as information poverty, which is manifested in phenomena such as planning without facts, unreliable information on economic and social issues and lack of decisive support information.

He said as a result the use of advanced technologies for better management to stimulate economic growth mainly resides in the foreseeable future in the developing world.

"The poverty line in Jordan is recognised by the

international community, and yet every few months a politician decides to re-adjust the benchmark for the poverty line, and I wonder how we can address the subject of global idiom, investment, economic interdependence with this arbitrary performance," the Crown Prince said.

The four-day conference is organised by the Higher Council of Science and Technology in cooperation with New York City University and City College.

Participants in the conference, numbering 300, will present 142 working papers dealing with the latest developments in computer sciences, information technology and artificial intelligence among a host of other related fields.

On the sidelines of the conference, 10 scientific workshops will be held, at the National Data Centre, the Royal Scientific Society, the Jordan Electricity Authority and the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation.

Anti-nuclear activist arrives in Amman with message of support for King

AMMAN (J.T.) — Ulrich Gottstein, a member of the Board of Directors of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), arrived in Amman Monday to present a letter of gratitude to His Majesty King Hussein for his efforts and support of nuclear disarmament.

Dr. Gottstein, a professor of medicine in Germany, told the Jordan Times that "among those who supported the ideas of IPPNW was King Hussein... [who] always supported the idea of nuclear weapon-free zones, especially in the

Middle East."

The IPPNW, a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985, is a non-partisan organisation which aims to educate people as well as politicians about the dangers of nuclear weapons.

The organisation has 200,000 member physicians worldwide, of which 146 are Jordanian, Egypt, Palestine, and Israel are also members. The IPPNW adheres to the principles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which was ratified in 1970.

PSD celebrates Arab police day

Royal Decree promotes senior officers

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was Monday issued approving the promotion of several senior Public Security Department (PSD) officers.

The decree approved the promotion of Brigadier Abdul Karim Tarawneh, Brigadier Abdul Hameed Isheid and Brigadier Adel Arnouti to the rank of major-general.

PSD Director Lieutenant-General Abdul Rahman Al Adwan decorated the officers with their new ranks at a special ceremony at his office Monday morning.

The ceremony, which coincided with the PSD's celebrations of the Arab Police Day, was attended by Commander of the Badia and Border Guard Force Major-General Fawaz Ben Zaben and senior PSD officers.

Later Monday, Lt.-Gen. Al Adwan attended the PSD's celebration of the

Arab Police Day held at the PSD Officers' Club.

At the celebration, several retired PSD personnel and families of policemen killed on duty were honoured in appreciation of their outstanding efforts in serving the department and national security.

Retired Major-General Fahed Gharaibeh delivered an address on behalf of the PSD's ex-servicemen, and paid tribute to the role of the department in preserving security and stability.

PSD Deputy Director for Traffic Affairs Major General Ibrahim Sariareh delivered another address in which he voiced pride in the role of the PSD at the national and international levels, highlighting the role of the department in peace-keeping operations in various parts of the world.

He said the PSD's responsibilities expanded in the peace era when the number of tourists visiting

Dead Sea developers say JVA leasing terms lacking incentives, burdensome

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Contracts for four major hotels on the Dead Sea will not be signed this month as originally planned after investors said this week that they will be asking for an extension to consider the terms of leasing being proposed by the Jordan Valley Authority.

The four hotels — initiatives of two Jordanian investment groups, two Jordanian investors and foreign hotel companies ACCOR and Marriott — are to be built on state land near the Dead Sea Spa Hotel, Jordan's only existing hotel

along the Dead Sea shore. Their total cost is estimated at \$280 million.

Officials in late November said they expected the contracts to be signed before the close of last month, but investors, unhappy about the terms,

have not yet signed contracts and are hoping that the government will reconsider its terms.

"We are asking that the government give us until after the new year to make a decision," said Khalil Talhouni, head of Zara Investments, whose company is planning a tourist village on the northern shore of the Dead Sea.

Investors said they want to consult further with other investors and lenders after they found the terms of the proposed lease to be burdensome.

Among their main concerns are stipulations in the lease agreement that investors provide their own infrastructure, including water and electricity, and that rent is paid in advance in five-year installments for the 30-year leasing period, and that the agreement does not allow for a grace period during which to design and

build.

Ziad Salah, representing the French hotel group ACCOR, which is planning to build hotels at the Dead Sea, Aqaba, Petra and Amman, said that these terms are unacceptable to the group of investors since the government, as a minimum incentive to private investors, should provide the necessary infrastructure.

"These terms are just not feasible for us," he said. "When a (hotel) room is occupied, it requires two cubic metres of water — can you tell me from where and how are we going to bring that water, among other things?"

Also, he said, it is standard that lessors give a grace period once the lessee comes into possession of the land, for designing and building, while he also criticised the leasing period as being too short.

"In a hotel, you don't even start to make money until after at least 20 years," he added, pointing out that in Israel, the length of lease is usually at least 50 years.

The four hotels at the Dead Sea would add some 1,600 rooms to the area (and would employ some 5,000-6,000 people according to Mr. Salah), but the rooms are still fewer than the 2,000 that already exist in Israel — which is already planning for major expansion. Under terms such as these, investors are concerned that they will not be able to compete.

"If we are talking about tourism development seriously," said Mr. Talhouni, "the government should look at changing some of these ideas. We would like to show (the government) what sort of incentives are being offered to our (Israeli) neighbours," Mr. Talhouni added.

The Israeli government gives a subsidy to private investors at 28 per cent of the cost of the hotel, Mr. Salah said, in addition to providing infrastructure, which is usually a given.

"The government in Israel gives assistance," Mr. Salah said. "Here, we are starting with negatives."

The four intend to submit an official request to extend the period in which they consider the terms of the lease, and Mr. Talhouni said he is optimistic that the government would reconsider its terms as well.

"We've yet to propose anything (to the government)," he said, "but it's my feeling that they are prepared to discuss and negotiate."

A source at the department of the Jordan Valley Authority overseeing the development of the area would not comment on the issue.

Swiss team to donate technical training aid

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) and a Swiss contact team Monday signed the minutes of their meetings over the past two weeks covering talks on Swiss technical aid to Jordan's vocational training centres.

The signing of the minutes followed visits to vocational training centres in Irbid, Moshare, Hama, Aqaba and Sahab by a team from the Swiss group to study their needs of equipment to be purchased through a JD 1.06 million Swiss donation to Jordan.

The equipment will serve trades such as electricity, auto-body welding, carpentry, air-conditioning, refrigeration and metal-casting, Mr. Nasrallah told the Jordan Times. The team of experts had conducted a survey of these centres and had studied instructor

needs for various trades, said Ali Nasrallah, VTC director general who signed the minutes with Swiss ambassador Gian Federico Bedotti.

The minutes provide for steps to be taken in the process of purchasing the equipment which will take place within five months, Mr. Nasrallah said.

Modern equipment will modernise training methods, enabling the VTC to provide training required for the labour market, Mr. Nasrallah said. He added that the VTC is currently undertaking a comprehensive revision of its training programmes following a Council of Minister's decision to this effect.

The VTC's revision includes classifying various trades and setting job descriptions, he said.

Amman to host Arab-African parliamentary conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'ed Hayel Srour met with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday to discuss arrangements for next month's eighth Arab-African parliamentary conference in Amman.

The prime minister underlined the importance of this conference, saying it should strengthen Arab-African parliamentary ties, Mr. Srour said.

The two-day meeting, which starts on Jan. 8, is an opportunity to promote bilateral cooperation and dialogue for the benefit of

Arab and African countries, Mr. Srour said.

Mr. Srour, who will chair the conference, said invitations have been sent out to Arab and African countries, the Arab League, the Organisation of African States and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The agenda of the conference will cover the role of Arab and African parliaments in helping defuse existing disputes between African and Arab nations, Afro-Arab cooperation in a Middle East and Africa nuclear free zone, and the liberation of trade between Arab and African nations.

Oil company receives 50-year prospecting concession

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Monday awarded the National Oil Company (NOC) a 50-year concession to prospect for oil and natural gas in the Kingdom.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Sami Darwazeh, who signed the deal with the NOC's board chairman Rajab Sa'ad, said the concession allows the company to conduct seismicological and geophysical as well as aerial surveys in the course of its exploration.

Speaking following the signing ceremony held at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Mr. Darwazeh said the renewable deal allows for the exploration of oil and gas in a specific region located in north-east and east of the Kingdom.

Mr. Darwazeh added that extracted oil will be marketed on commercial basis.

According to the minister, the company will drill wells, set up storage facilities for oil and appropriate land for use by the company.

He said the company and the Jordanian government will share the returns of oil and gas sales. Mr. Darwazeh also said the NOC will submit a bi-annual report to the ministry of energy and mineral resources on its activities and plans.

The NOC, which came into being in July this year with a JD 20 million capital, will conduct operations at the Risheb district to produce more gas mainly for use in electric power generation, according to the minister.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Energy said Monday a team representing the American oil company, Anadarko, has arrived in Amman for talks at the Natural Resources Authority on oil and gas prospecting in Jordan.

Mr. Darwazeh said several American firms have already expressed willingness to sign profit-sharing agreements for oil prospecting with Jordan.

He said Anadarko has tentatively agreed to invest \$20 million in its operations.

SSC director outlines corporation services

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Social Security Corporation (SSC) which established in 1980, has to date provided services and benefits to citizens employed by a total of 10,330 firms and organisations in Jordan, according to Safwan Touqan, the corporation's director general.

Dr. Touqan was addressing the chairman and members of the Legal Committee of the Lower House of Parliament to whom he outlined SSC services and achievements over the past 16 years.

The total number of citizens benefiting from SSC services was 789,876 of whom 73.8 per cent are Jordanians according to Dr. Touqan. He added that the services covered compensation to beneficiaries for death and occupational injuries and pension benefits to senior citizens.

Dr. Touqan said the corporation's investments are in banks, real estate, hotels, tourist installations, housing projects and others, which yielded JD 80.6 million in profits between Sept. of last year and Sept. 1995.

The SSC is conducting studies to widen its services and increase its operations, he said.

At the outset of the meeting, Labour Minister Nader Alhul Shar' noted that the SSC and the Ministry of Labour were finalising arrangements for increasing the pension of beneficiaries as of 1996.

The Council of Ministers last month decided that retired citizens covered by the SSC can expect a 10 per cent increase in their pensions next year.

The measure benefits already retired personnel and all future pensioners, and means that the SSC will incur an additional cost of JD 10 million annually.

The minister noted that the amendment to the SSC law to cater to the 10 per cent increase has been referred to the Legal Committee for endorsement before it becomes law, saying the SSC corporation has set up a special committee to receive suggestions and ideas for further amending the SSC law.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON

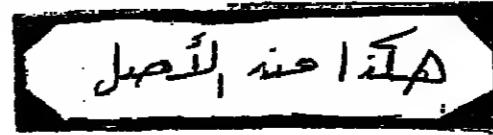
FILM
* "Lissy" (in German with subtitles in English) at the Goethe-Institute at 8:00 p.m.

BAZAAR
* Bazaar at the Greek Orthodox Church in the Ruwaq Neighbourhood, Fuheis. (until Dec. 22)

POETRY RECITAL
* Recital of poems by Dr. Mahmoud Shalabi at the Phoenix Gallery, Gardens St., at 6:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS SALE
* Gifts (publications by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, hand-painted Christmas cards, hand-crafted silver jewellery, recycled glass, pottery) at Beit Al Fuheis Hall, Fuheis (until Dec. 22).

* Gifts and crafts by Suha Lallas Kassisieh (includes Christmas items, table mats, baskets, wall-hangings, candle-holders and side-lamps) at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra Street (until Dec. 31).



Gingrich chosen Time's 1995 Man of the Year

NEW YORK (AFP) — Newt Gingrich, the fiery and controversial speaker of the Republican-led House of Representatives, has been chosen 1995's Man of the Year by Time magazine.

Widely credited with engineering the 1994 electoral coup that saw the Republicans retake the House from the Democrats for the first time in 40 years, Mr. Gingrich has "changed the language and substance of American politics," Time said.

Despised by the Democrats as defeated, Mr. Gingrich finds himself on the cover of Time at a bitter-sweet moment.

Just as the Republican goal of a balanced budget within seven years is within reach, the speaker has recently become the subject of a tax-fraud investigation, and his approval ratings are below 30 per cent according to some polls.

Mr. Gingrich has denied any wrongdoing, but Democrats are hoping a special prosecutor designat-

ed earlier this month by the House Ethics Committee will look beyond accusations that he allegedly misused tax-free contributions to fund a college course he taught in his southern state of Georgia.

It would be no small irony if the charges bring him down. After all, it was Mr. Gingrich who brought down Democratic House Speaker Jim Wright in a cloud of ethical controversy in 1989 — the first speaker in U.S. history to resign.

As Time cautions, however, Mr. Gingrich, 52, has managed to pull off several rebirths in a career that began 20 years ago.

Only on the third try did he win his Georgia congressional seat in 1978, and his successful campaign against a tax hike supported by President George Bush in 1990 nearly cost him his incumbency.

Charismatic, colourful and nearly always controversial, Mr. Gingrich was the brainchild behind the so-called Contract With

America — the 100-day Republican agenda calling for a dramatic scaleback of the federal bureaucracy created largely by Democratic presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson.

He crafted the plan even though few political analysts predicted the House would go Republican in 1994, and his convictions earned him the respect and loyalty of the troops in the "Republican revolution" he led.

Prone to speak in superlative terms laden with references to the information age, Mr. Gingrich once said all poor people should be given a laptop computer.

More recently, he not-so-subtly suggested that he allowed the government to partially shut down in a budget fight with the White House because President Bill Clinton made him sit on the back of Air Force One on a flight to attend the funeral of slain Israeli leader Yitzak Rabin.

But above all, Mr. Gingrich — who recently

ended speculation about a possible presidential run — has become the central ideological power in the U.S. Congress, and has done more to shape the raging debate about the role of the federal government than any other leader.

"Gingrich is our 1995 Man of the Year because his rise and partial fall were emblematic of an historic shift in Washington that will be felt for generations to come," Time said in a statement released Sunday, a day before its special year-end issue hits newsstands.

"For better or worse, he has changed the language and substance of American politics," said the magazine's Managing Editor James Gaines. "Perhaps like no other politician in recent history."

For at least a generation, Time predicted, no president is likely to propose spending more than the government earns, or expanding what it attempts to do.



Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky raises his arms in Jubilation in his Social Democratic Party's headquarters in Vienna after winning 38.32 per cent of the vote in the general elections (AFP photo)

Austrian leaders mull future after elections; right licks wounds

VIENNA (R) — Austrian leaders met their top party officials Monday to reflect on the results of Sunday's snap general election and to map out strategy ahead of talks to form a new coalition government.

Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, whose Social Democrats won their best election result since 1990 with 38.3 per cent of the vote, said before meeting his party chiefs that voters had clearly rejected a sharp swing to the right.

"The results of the general election Sunday indicated a clear 'no' by the Austrian people to co-operation between the (conservative) People's Party (OVP) and the (far-right) Freedom Party," Mr. Vranitzky told Austria Radio International.

Joerg Haider's anti-immigration Freedom Party lost around 1,300 votes nationwide and one seat in parliament, reducing its total of deputies to 41 in the 183-member parliament.

The result was a blow to the party which had campaigned hard on a law and order platform, blaming illegal immigrants for a rise in Austria's crime rate.

Mr. Schuessel, disappointed by his 28.1 per cent

control of the party in 1986. Mr. Haider, glossing over the slip in support, said the outcome of the election was proof that his former success was not based on a protest vote.

Mr. Vranitzky, barely able to conceal his glee at halting a 16-year erosion of support for the left, said the election showed voters had backed a gentler approach to cutting Austria's huge budget deficit.

But traders took a different view, seeing increased backing for the Social Democrats as negative for the markets. Austria's ATX Index of 20 blue chip stocks fell below 940 points at 1000 GMT for the first time this month.

The coalition with the OVP, led by Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schuessel, collapsed in October when the two parties failed to bridge their differences on how to pare down the deficit, estimated to be running at 120 billion schillings (\$12 billion) in 1995.

Mr. Schuessel, disappointed by his 28.1 per cent

election rally, was accused by the left of bringing down the government for his own

personal ambition and lust

The prospect of budget negotiations dragging on until the end of January unsettled investors.

"A Socialist victory has

never been good for the markets," one bond trader said. "Because of this result, a lot of things have become much, much more difficult than people imagined."

Some traders warned a weakened conservative party could make cutting the deficit more problematic and put membership in a future European Currency Union at risk.

"The coming weeks will be decisive and the market will be watching for every headline," said Roman Eisenschenk, a trader with Deutsche Bank in Vienna.

Vicar apologises for denying existence Santa

LONDON (AFP) — A vicar was obliged to apologise Sunday for denying the existence of Father Christmas and the Tooth Fairy, the Daily Telegraph reported Monday. Reverend Brian Edwards of the Anglican Church of Saint Lawrence at Abbots Langley, just north of London, had caused children among his flock to burst into tears when he said in a sermon the previous week that it was their parents who filled their stockings on Christmas Eve. A number of parents complained as a result. Rev. Edwards said that he had been trying to explain to the children that the birth of Jesus Christ was not a fairy tale, unlike the story of Father Christmas, the Telegraph said.

Michael Jackson recuperates at Disneyland Paris

PARIS (AFP) — Rock star Michael Jackson has been resting on doctors' orders at Disneyland Paris after gastro-enteritis kept him in hospital for six days, park managers here said Monday. Jackson, 37, arrived in Paris from New York on Concorde late Saturday and, accompanied by nephews and security personnel, took the presidential "Sleeping Beauty" suite. He visited the huge park with his entourage Sunday, waving to fans from his hotel balcony. Park staff said he wanted to return to the attractions Monday. It is the fifth time he has visited Disneyland Paris but the first at this time of year. It was not clear how long he would be staying. Jackson left hospital on Dec. 12 after a bout of gastro-enteritis. He was admitted six days earlier after fainting during rehearsals for a televised special.

Rare parrots' squawking alerts Italian customs

ROME (R) — Italian customs officials Saturday seized 52 rare parrots at Rome airport after they heard squawking from luggage belonging to two Nigerian women. Officials swooped as the women, who had arrived from Lagos, waited for a flight to Bombay with their luggage full of red and grey Psittacus Erythracus parrots, worth about \$10,000 each.

Surgeons cut 45 kg of fat and skin from Man

Los Angeles (R) — A Los Angeles man who recently lost 400 pounds (180 kg) underwent surgery Friday to have another 100 pounds (45 kg) of excess skin and fat cut from his body. Tommy McGruder was placed under anaesthetic at Chapman Medical Centre in the Los Angeles suburb of Orange for an operation that doctors expected to last late into the night. The roughly 12 sq ft (1.1 sq metres) of flesh and fat will be donated to a Pennsylvania research facility, where scientists will use the tissue to test experimental drugs for heart disease and motion sickness.

Hospital spokeswoman Trish Bartel said the procedure was going smoothly. She said doctors planned to start on Mr. McGruder's legs, then move to the stomach. Ms. Bartel said Mr. McGruder would be kept in the hospital's intensive care unit, wrapped in bandages, until Sunday. He is scheduled for release Monday. Mr. McGruder, who has been bedridden by his obesity for nearly three years, dropped from 800 to 400 pounds (360 to 180 kg) over the last five months.

But the giant folds of drooping skin that resulted have made it difficult for him to move and have presented a health hazard because they attract bacteria.

Indonesia-Australia sign security pact

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia signed a historic security agreement with Australia Monday, which both sides see easing mutual suspicion while boosting military cooperation between the large but diverse neighbours.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas and his Australian counterpart Gareth Evans signed the pact in the presence of President Suharto and Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating.

"This is a statement which makes clear what our strategic intentions are towards one another," Mr. Keating said. "It must do a lot to reduce suspicions in both countries of both countries," he told a news conference.

The agreement follows decades of unease between two countries whose troops clashed in the jungles of Borneo in the early 1960s.

Indonesian State Secretary Mardiono told reporters Mr. Suharto had told Mr. Keating he hoped the agreement would eliminate doubt in Australia about Jakarta's intentions.

"If it cannot be abolished, it is expected this agreement can reduce the doubt," Mr. Mardiono quoted Mr. Suharto as saying.

Mr. Mardiono quoted Mr.

Suharto as saying the agreement was important for security and stability in the region as well as for the economic development and prosperity of both countries.

"What it does is give full expression to the kind of relationship I believe we should have always had with Indonesia and it is a declaration of trust and cooperation on both our parts," Mr. Keating told told reporters.

Mr. Keating, on his fifth visit to Indonesia since becoming prime minister in 1991, was in Jakarta with a high-powered delegation, including Deputy Prime Minister Kim Beazley, Defence Minister Robert Ray and armed forces chief General John Baker.

The agreement commits the two countries to consult regularly on common security and challenges, as well as to promote security cooperation.

The two diverse but strong neighbours control land masses among the biggest in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mainly-Moslem Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous nation with about 193 million people, has been ruled with a firm hand by retired General Suharto since the late 1960s.

Australia, a member of

the Commonwealth, has about 18 million people.

Both nations said the agreement would boost already growing defence ties between the nations' armed forces.

It is essentially a green light to defence forces that more can be done," Mr. Keating said.

Indonesian paratroopers took part in Australia's annual multinational war games for the first time this year, despite protests from groups supporting East Timor independence.

Last week's announcement that the agreement would be signed Monday after 18 months of secret negotiations received applause and condemnation in Australia.

East Timorese activists in Australia condemned it as a sellout but some analysts said it was a sign of maturing relations.

If it had been a more public process, there probably would not have been a treaty," Mr. Keating said.

Indonesia invaded East Timor, 480 kilometres from Australia, in 1975 and annexed it in the following year.

Among Western nations, only Australia recognises its sovereignty over the troubled former Portuguese colony.

Arms body holds crucial talks with Sinn Fein

DUBLIN (R) — An international panel aiming to boost a fragile Northern Ireland peace through guerrilla disarmament held crucial talks Monday with Sinn Fein, the political arm of the IRA.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA), which baited a war against British rule 16 months ago, refuses to comply with London's demand that its weapons be scrapped to secure a place for Sinn Fein at all-party talks.

Pro-British Protestant guerrillas, operating a matching truce, also rule out an arms handover.

Sinn Fein said before meeting members of the U.S.-backed disarmament panel at Dublin Castle that any moves to "decommission" arms must include the weaponry of British forces and their Protestant "Unionist" supporters.

Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein president, demanding Britain drop its arms-before-talks condition, said: "All of the weapons in the situation must be taken out of it... We need, all of us, to come together to talk about the future.

"Guns have been silenced. We need to use that opportunity to bring about democratisation and to talk about the amount of constitutional and political change which is required to underpin these cessations."

Britain and Ireland established the so-called "international body," headed by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, after a months-long stalemate on the arms question threatened to derail the peace secured by guerrilla truces.

British ministers insist IRA disarmament is vital to reassure the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland that a bloody campaign on their "union" with Britain is finally over.

Sinn Fein says Britain introduced the precondition after the IRA called off its 25-year war to oust British forces in September 1994, to humiliate the guerrillas and woo vital votes from Protestant legislators in the British parliament.

This high turnout shows people value elections and democracy," said Mr. Adams, head of the Presidential Analytical Centre, although he had hoped the turnout would reach 60 per cent. It appeared to be slightly lower, at about 56 per cent.

Judgments and predictions of the results were hard to make even by dawn in Moscow, more than nine hours after the last polling stations had closed. The Central Electoral Commission fell far behind its own schedule for announcing results.

"No-one really expects the British to decommission their weapons but we would expect them to take their armed forces back into their own country," Mr. Adams told Irish Radio.

"That's not a fantasy, it

can happen," he said.

The Canberra Commission, launched by Prime Minister Paul Keating last month amid continuing global protest at France's decision to resume its South Pacific nuclear test programme, will hold its first meeting between Jan. 23 and 25.

Among its 15 members will be former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard and former U.S. Defence Secretary Robert McNamara.

Among its major objectives will be new international legislation halting the production of weapons-grade fissile material. Mr. Butler said.

A central part of the commission's report will be rogue states, terrorist groups, extra-systemic acquisition of nuclear explosive capability.

"It would be folly to ask anyone to give up what they thought was important for their security only to face something like this."

"We will need a major piece of international law which brings to an end the production of weapons-grade fissile material, plutonium in particular, but to some extent enriched uranium that forms the core of these weapons," he said.

"I knew that it was illegal but I blindly followed it for the sake of the cause, in that we would undergo apprenticeship under the guru," Mr. Keating told the second hearing of his case at the Tokyo District Court.

Mr. Keating has been charged with various crimes including production of banned drugs, the subway atrocity and another nerve-gas attack in the old castle town of Matsumoto in June 1994.

Keating commission to target rogue states in anti-nuclear campaign

SYDNEY (R) — Australia will target rogue states and terrorist groups in its campaign for a global ban on nuclear weapons, Australia's ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Butler, said Monday.

Mr. Butler, who will head a high-profile Australian commission aimed at ridding the world of nuclear weapons, told reporters in Canberra it was crucial to convince nuclear states that their security would be maintained without nuclear weapons.

"That leads, naturally, to rogue states, because it would be a bitter irony indeed if those who had these weapons got rid of them in the name of humanity, only to find that they were then threatened by rogue states or terrorist groups who had in a clandestine way acquired nuclear weapons or even nuclear briefcase-type capabilities," he said.

"It would be folly to ask anyone to give up what they thought was important for their security only to face something like this."

Most of the response had come from Europe and North America as well as the South Pacific nations.



Russian soldiers fix hand-grenades along the road to the town of Ursus-Martan, in Chechnya, where some fighting between Russian army and Chechen separatist fighters were reported (AFP photo)

Russians and Chechens battle for fifth day

MOSCOW (R) — Russian forces battled Chechen rebels in the region's second city, Gudermes, Monday in a fifth day of fighting linked to Russia's parliamentary election, Interfax News Agency said.

Russian troops stranded in the buildings of military headquarters and a railway station in Gudermes were surrounded by the rebels and again under heavy fire, Interfax said, quoting the Russian military command in Chechnya.

Interfax said that in the last 24 hours three Russian soldiers had been wounded in 29 rebel attacks on Russian positions. Most of the attacks were in the capital Grozny.

A military spokesman also told Interfax a group of 100 rebels had tried to break through Russian positions near the village of Ursus.

Martian Sunday night.

Some of them had been killed during 50 minutes of heavy fighting, he said without mentioning Russian casualties. There was no independent word from Chechnya on the latest fighting.

Rebels opposing Russian efforts to stage local elections and the national parliamentary vote in Chechnya infiltrated Gudermes Thursday, Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov has said.

32 soldiers were killed and 41 wounded Thursday in Gudermes, but other reports suggested heavier Russian losses.

The city, 30 kilometers east of Grozny, is sealed off by Russian troops and reporters are barred from approaching it.

On Sunday, Russian officials claimed a big election victory for their preferred

candidate to lead Chechnya but journalists in the region cast doubt on the way the vote was staged.

Moscow killed the vote as the only alternative to more bloodshed but their early start Thursday brought a flare-up in fighting which critics say can only get worse.

President Boris Yeltsin's Chief of Staff Sergei Filatov told ITAR-TASS news agency Dokuzayev had won 65 to 90 per cent of the vote for regional leader. Official turnout figures ranged from 50 to 70 per cent, although journalists on the ground saw little evidence of voting.

In Grozny, fires, bomb attacks and intimidation by rebels meant many polling stations had not even opened. Our Home was credited with 9.5 per cent of the nationwide vote in early results.

New S. Korean premier urges break from past

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's new prime minister took office Monday with a call for reform in order to "put history to rights" and to root out the legacy of corruption under military-backed rule.

Speaking to a gathering of government officials after parliament approved his appointment by an overwhelming majority, legal scholar Lee Soo-Sung urged support for his mission to banish a discredited system.

"Putting history to rights is a starting point towards correcting our mistaken path and opening up a new era in which justice and love flow like a river," Mr. Lee said.

The appointment of Mr. Lee, president of Seoul National University, marked the first step in an effort by beleaguered President Kim Young-Sam to distance his administration from a corruption scandal that has engulfed two of his predecessors.

Mr. Lee took office hours after disgraced former President Rob Tae-Won appeared in court with eight business moguls and six others to face charges of accepting \$369 million in bribes during Mr. Rob's tenure.

Mr. Rob's predecessor Chung Doo Hwan is also in detention and is expected to be charged with corruption and with masterminding a 1979 coup that led to an army massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators in the city of Kwangju.

By selecting Mr. Lee, a respected legal scholar from South Korea's most distinguished university, Mr. Kim was seen as promoting the rule of law in a country where business and political elites have traditionally acted in sleazy collusion.

But South Korean analysts were skeptical whether Mr. Kim could solve his problems by naming a political novice as prime minister, a largely figurehead post

under the country's presidential system. They dismissed cabinet reshuffles as Mr. Kim's reflexive response to political trouble.

"This is Kim Young-Sam's fifth prime minister," said a Western diplomat. "He's getting careless."

In separate comments reported by local media, Mr. Lee suggested he did not expect to last long.

"I don't have plans to serve as premier for long, nor do I have prospects of staying there for long," Yonhap News Agency quoted the incoming prime minister as telling a gathering of university administrators Monday.

On Sunday Mr. Lee met Mr. Kim and urged him to make a thorough house-cleaning to curb the influence of conservatives who served under Mr. Chung and Mr. Rob, Yonhap said.

He told Mr. Kim to fill the 21-member cabinet with "young, fresh and reform-minded people" and urged the president to toss out ministers who disagreed with his policies, the agency reported.

In his speech Monday Mr. Lee called on the government to "go beyond merely settling accounts with individual persons and boldly reform bad systems and practices".

Local media have reported that outgoing Prime Minister Lee Hong-Koo was replaced to enable him to stand as a star candidate for the ruling party in general elections next April.

Political analysts said this indicated that the reshuffle was as much political manoeuvring as house-cleaning.

Lee Hong-Koo will reportedly be deployed to mend political fences in the southeastern city of Taegu, home base of Mr. Chung and Mr. Rob, where voters are angered by Mr. Kim's rough handling of the region's most famous sons.

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By Rami G. Khoury

Jordan Times

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Duality on delicate scale

POPE JOHN PAUL II inched closer than ever to recognising Israeli grip on Jerusalem when he was quoted as telling the widow of the late Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin last week that the Vatican viewed Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state. True the Pope also said that the Holy City has a dual character, one being the capital of Israel and the other as the capital of the three monotheistic faiths. Yet on closer look this acceptance of the dual importance of Jerusalem lacks balance. Recognising the religious significance of the city to Muslims and Christians is not comparable to accepting it as the political capital of the state of Israel.

For starters, the formulation excludes Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian people at a time when there is a mounting chorus of international opinion, including Israeli, which calls for East Jerusalem to be the capital of a Palestinian state. Secondly, the determination of the future status of Jerusalem was deliberately postponed by the concerned parties until the very end of the peace process due to its complexity and the conflicting claims to it. This is not to mention that the entire issue is so emotionally charged that not even, or especially, the Pope should talk about it now.

Equally relevant is the proposition that there are in fact two Jerusalems, one in the West and the other in the East. There are many ingenious ways to reconcile the different claims to the city that have yet to be fully explored. Pronouncements on Jerusalem as of now, particularly by the Holy See, that may aim to seal its future one way or another could be prejudicial to the future negotiations on its status. We may take comfort from the fact that the Vatican has effectively issued a disclaimer of what Mrs. Rabin said. But unless the Pope actually says otherwise we would continue to believe that there has been a shift in the Vatican's official stand on Jerusalem. Until the Palestinians and Israelis begin the search for a solution that is fair to all sides, politically and religiously, neither the Pope nor anybody else should prejudice the status and future of Jerusalem.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i daily Monday said that the government has to do something in the face of rising prices and poverty that have been plaguing the majority of the Jordanian people. We are face to face with a national issue called poverty, coupled with the rise in prices of most basic commodities, some of which have risen in price by at least 50 per cent this year, said Tareq Masarweh. He said that as long as the income of most citizens remain very limited, the ordinary people will continue to face hardships and they patiently await some form of government intervention that can take the form of fixing prices and bridling the greediness of the irresponsible merchants. The writer said that the government should fix the minimum wages paid to workers, stop the continual flow of non-Jordanian workers into the country, draw up a national health insurance scheme covering all citizens and force the smokers who spent at least JD 20 a month on smoking to contribute more to the health insurance scheme. He said it is good that the government is offering incentives and privileges to foreign firms and investors to attract capital needed for development, but it is equally important for the government to give attention to the Jordanian people's basic needs.

A WRITER in Al Ra'i lauded a decision by the Syrian government to release all detainees of Muslim Brotherhood members, calling it a necessary step to help enhance national unity at a time when Damascus is facing mounting pressures by forces trying to reshape the Middle East's order. Bassam Emoush, who is also an Islamic Action Front member of the Lower House of Parliament, said that Syria is in need of a strong domestic front, which he said could be achieved through the contribution of the Muslim Brotherhood who would never spare any effort towards serving their country and their nation. He said that close cooperation between governments and people in the current stage is a must if the nation's interests are to be safe guarded. The release of the detainees, said the writer, is bound to remove lingering mistrust and pave the way for a united front in the face of pressures and challenges in the coming stage.

The View from Fourth Circle

Where holy books and happy electronics meet

IF A SINGLE incident can summarise the global contest now underway between different concepts of civilisation, cultural values and human identity, it might be the following incident that I personally experienced a few weeks ago. While walking through one of the most important official complexes in Jordan, I walked past two different soldiers who were on duty indoors, in a capacity as much ceremonial as a real line of defence. The first one, standing upright with his rifle ready for action should catastrophe strike, was reading a small Koran. The second soldier, sitting on a chair with his armament equally ready to protect the realm should the need arise, was playing with a Game Boy (the hand-held Japanese electronic game that is so popular with children around the world, especially in the industrialised West). I continued on my way — rather dazed by this extraordinary juxtaposition of two uniformed and armed protectors of my state and society, one with a Koran, the other with a Game Boy.

What does this mean? I have been asking myself ever since. Was this truly some microcosm of the cosmic battle for our soul and our future that I witnessed, or nothing more meaningful than two ordinary fellows with rather different ideas about how to use available time? So strong was the dual symbolism of juxtaposed Koran and Game Boy — one of ancient, righteous morality, the other of rampant, materialistic post-modernism — that I figured this had to be a slightly profound moment of revelation, if not about our future directions and identities, than at least about our current inclinations and options. Was our future to be decided by the comforting dictates of morality and religious humanism, or by the happy electronic passion of addictive and perpetually profitable gaming?

As I have pondered this, it has caused me to think back also on another recent event in my life that was less startling but just as culturally memorable and intellectually provocative. This was a conference in Washington that I was privileged to participate in, and whose deliberations, in retrospect, touched on the same issue that was raised by the Koran/Game Boy dichotomy. The conference was organised by the Washington-based Foundation on Democracy and Political Change in the Middle East (FDPCME), whose director is Georgetown University Professor Daniel Brumberg. With funding from the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy, the foundation has held two conferences in the last two years that have brought together a very representative cross-section of analysts and activists from the Arab World and the United States.

The aim of the conferences — like the symbolism of my two soldiers — was to explore trends in U.S.-Arab relations, specifically in the context of the role of democracy as an important element for both societies. The most recent conference reconfirmed for me two points that I have long believed: a) that Arab and American society are engaged in a epic, almost existential cultural confrontation, similar to what I would later witness in the soldiers' hands, and b) that this confrontation could become a mutually beneficial synthesis rather than a mutually corrosive clash if reasonable people from both sides spent more time together discussing the components of Arab and American political cultures that are driving the process on both sides.

There is a growing global industry today that generates meetings, papers, books and ideas about different cultures around the world and how they interact, clash or learn from one another. This global dynamic is usually expressed in

three parallel ways: political values, economic systems and cultural habits, with the important element of religion usually subsumed under the political and cultural categories. The interaction between different cultures is often presented as a zero-sum game, that one side will triumph, and dominate all other cultures and markets: reduced to its most simple, this means having to choose between the Koran or Game Boy (the more common global expression of this dynamic is Jihad vs. McWorld).

I am increasingly convinced that this confrontational interpretation of global cultural interaction is unnecessarily pessimistic and violence-prone. The value of meetings such as the FDPCME conference is that they permit us to identify those broad points of agreement among Arabs and Americans that we can fortify and build upon, while highlighting the points of disagreement that need to be better understood and more deeply discussed.

For example, I value and admire most democratic systems, but I also have some major reservations about using democracy as a yardstick of political change in any part of the South, or the developing world. The tendency in the United States and most other parts of the world is to see democracy as not only the goal of rational societies, but also almost as the criterion and measure of their validity as members of the club of civilised nations. The obvious American tendency today is to trumpet democracy and free market economics as the dual hallmarks of a healthy and meaningful society. Because America is so powerful, the tendency among the rest of the world is to react and to respond to whatever America says, feels or desires. The powerful set the agenda. That's the way the world has always worked.

The most important point of agreement at the recent FDPCME conference was about the centrality of pluralism, freedom and civil society as components of a healthy nation. People from throughout the Middle East, North Africa, the Gulf and the USA generally agreed on the danger of allowing the state or any single political idea to control society. There are many different and credible ideas about how to organise a community on the basis of freedom, pluralism and civic society. American-style democracy is one idea among the many.

The meeting emphasised the very rich interplay between American concepts of participatory democracy and the varied Arab experience with two important elements of our lives: the many episodes of Western colonial domination and political manipulation of Arab societies in the past two centuries, and the very varied examples of Arab societies today seeking new forms of political expression and organisation, ranging from the Islamist, tribalist and monarchist to the police state and models of ethnic anarchy. What becomes clear from such gatherings is the fact that we already notice a cleavage of American and Arab societies into two rough camps: those who worship free market, individualistic democracy, and those who prefer more traditional communal and national configurations, usually with a strong dose of religion and centralised control. Many in the Arab World share the prevalent views of the American establishment about the need for stability and economic liberalisation as top priorities for the Arab World, while many in the United States share the predominant Arab desire for change and more social justice and power-sharing in Arab society.

The Arab World is characterised by an extraordinary range of attempts to develop new political structures and systems that are faithful to traditional Arab social culture

and moral values while also being more participatory, pluralistic and accountable. There is a pronounced tension in the Arab desire to become more politically modern and democratic, without becoming culturally totally American or Western. A Moroccan thinker described this as the quest for a third burst or wave of democracy, following on the direct Athenian democracy and the modern American/Western participatory democracy. It is possible that the Arab World (or East Asia, or India, or somewhere else) will provide this third model of participatory political culture that is both democratic yet also traditional and rather tribal. This process of making political history should engage Arabs and Americans in a much closer dynamic of learning and thinking together. Our existing ideological debate enjoys many agreements and divergences that are not sufficiently caught by the mass media's more simplistic focus on dramatic symbols such as Islam, democracy, terrorism or freedom.

The truly fascinating aspect of the Washington conference for me was not the debate about how we should organise our societies politically, but rather the more subtle disagreement about the elements of time and history — elements that I believe are central to the current global cultural confrontation. These days, most Americans, along with their commercial agents or cultural echoes in the Third World, stress the importance of forgetting about history and its specific injustices. We are urged instead to focus on the present and the future, to change our ways so that we fit more easily into the global system of production and consumption that is the world's dominant — if not its only — ideology. We will find satisfaction and security in joining the world's march of free and democratic Game Boy players, we are advised.

A common Arab reaction to this proposition suggests that we do not want to, or are unable to forget about history and its episodes of injustice. The Arab tendency is to look to a correction of the mistakes of the past as a key to unlocking the route to a better future. Perhaps the past is comforting to us because as societies we excelled in the past, while today we suffer serious dependencies and distortions. Perhaps it is something deeper, something related to our psychological make-up as people who manifest the cumulative legacy of over ten thousand years of settled village and city life. We have learned something useful over that period of time, particularly that some moral values endure for more than a few generations. Perhaps we are telling the U.S. that we sense some value in retaining elements of the past that can provide a steady base from which to work for a durable future. We may be saying that we will find satisfaction and security by giving expression to the world's ancient and enduring commitment to societies governed by strict rules of morality, religion and cultural limits.

The interaction between Koran and Game Boy will continue for as long as human beings retain a rational capacity to make choices, and to govern their lives according to their own needs and desires. It becomes clear, after some serious head scratching, that the symbols may be striking, but they are not mutually exclusive. We are not involved in a cosmic zero-sum game of winner-takes-all. The more that we engage with others from different cultures, the more obvious this becomes, and the more important it becomes to keep engaging with those whose ideas or cultures differ from ours. This is a strength of modern America, and also a strength of ancient and new Arabs.

LETTERS

'Putting the horse in its natural place'

To the Editor:

IN HIS article "Putting the horse" (Jordan Times, Dec. 17), architect Ammar Khammash expressed his concern for the preservation of the country's cultural and natural sites, and claimed that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has given priority to tourism rather than preservation. Although we appreciate Mr. Khammash's concern for preservation, one cannot help being surprised at his skewed approach to the subject and the inaccurate statements included in his article. For instance, he says that, "In Umm Qais, the ministry has started a parking lot and the job was tendered to a contractor who bulldozed an olive grove," and he adds that, "these are the remains of an era of fast decisions, or archaeology dragged by shortsighted plans, and of placing touristic needs before protection." It should be pointed out that the transfer of the car park to the south of the city wall was carefully worked out, for the earlier location was not only offensive but also unacceptable because it was situated within the city wall and sitting on important archaeological remains. Excavation in the earlier car park area this summer has uncovered the podium of a Roman temple. It was precisely the protection of archaeological remains which led to the transfer of the earlier car park to a new location. Furthermore, the new entry to the site corresponds to one of the original entries into the city, and the new car park area is spacious enough to erect a building to cater for the needs of the increasing number of visitors.

As to the other claim that the ministry is thinking of opening the site of Umm Qais as "international excavation site" to excavate and finish all for total display of the city to tourists" is new news to the ministry since such a plan has never been brought up, though there is a scope for further excavation in the site.

As the number of visitors grew, so the need for "tidying up" the cultural heritage site has become more acute. The endeavour to preserve these sites while making them more accessible and intelligible to the visitors is the chief challenge facing all those concerned with ancient sites and monuments today. Needless to say that people have various views on how these objectives can be achieved.

Regarding Mr. Khammash "understanding" of the minister's remarks during the recent meeting of the Friends of Archaeology, Mr. Khammash is being unique again in his own way. Other participants in the meeting, including conservators, landscape architects, archaeologists and environmentalists, understood the opposite. The debate has focused on how to manage and protect Wadi Rum while allowing tourists to enjoy its majestic landscapes.

The Cabinet decided recently to set up a committee to study issues related to managing tourism in Wadi Rum. This decision stemmed from the government's awareness of the need to preserve this unique site, in a manner we hope will put the horse in its natural place.

We also hope that the findings and recommendations of this commission will ease up the concerns of those who really care for the preservation of natural and historic sites.

The Press Office,
Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities,
Amman.



Austria election over, the hard work begins

By Steve Pagani

Reuter

VIENNA — Chancellor Franz Vranitzky's success in snap general elections still left Austria facing an uncertain future ahead of a new coalition and a 1996 budget deal.

Many of the 5.7 million voters cast their ballots tactically on Sunday, denying support to small opposition parties to ensure the far-right was kept out of power, political analysts said.

Mr. Vranitzky's Social-Democrats (SPOE) won 38.3 per cent of the vote and will have 72 seats, a gain of seven, in the 183-member parliament. The ecologist Greens and Liberal Forum parties lost both votes and parliamentary seats.

"Many voters backed the SPOE, who had never voted for them before and probably never will again," said Wolfgang Bachmayer, chief analyst at Austria's OGM Polling Institute.

"They supported the SPOE solely to make sure (far-right leader Joerg) Haider did not get into government."

Mr. Haider's anti-immigrant Freedom Party got 22.1 per cent of the vote, a drop of less than half a point on the October 1994 election. The result was a blow to Mr. Haider, who was hoping for 25 per cent, but was unlikely to sound his death knell.

"Haider is hard to put down. He has a solid presence. Because he was oversold, it is a loss for him, but he's not out of the picture," said George Schopflin, professor of East European studies at the University of London.

With 41 seats in parliament, Mr. Haider still commands the strongest far-right parliamentary bloc in Western Europe.

Apart from fear of the far-right, voters also revealed their reluctance to swallow the bitter medicine prescribed by conservative leader Wolfgang Schuessel, who sought sweeping cuts in public spending to cut a big budget deficit.

Mr. Schuessel split from a coalition with Mr. Vranitzky two months ago, prompting elections three years ahead

of schedule.

The government collapsed because the left and the conservatives could not agree on how to slim the 1995 budget deficit of 120 billion schillings (\$12 billion).

Mr. Schuessel refused to accept SPOE proposals to raise taxes to reduce the deficit, calling instead for real cuts in Austria's generous welfare system and pension payments.

"The popular wish was for low-pain reforms, not radical changes as suggested by the OEPB, but rather more moderate ones proposed by the SPOE," Mr. Bachmayer said.

In many respects, after two months of campaigning and millions of schillings (dollars) in election expenses, it is back to square one. Coalition talks between Mr. Vranitzky and Mr. Schuessel could be messy and drag on for weeks.

Mr. Schuessel, whose party won 28.3 per cent, a wafer-thin rise of 0.6 per cent, said he was ready to begin talks with Mr. Vranitzky over the formation of a new grand coalition, but

he refused to climb down over his economic proposals.

"We do not want to see tax rises and more money taken away from our young workers," he told Austrian television.

"We have to work out how we are going to make cuts and sort out the problem of early retirement."

Mr. Schuessel argued that voters were influenced by television pictures of the industrial unrest in France, sparked by Prime Minister Alain Juppe's proposed social security reforms, and said they feared similar instability in Austria.

Analysts said Austrians were less concerned with the country meeting the European Union's Maastricht criteria for monetary union than the threat to their living standards.

Austria would currently fail the Maastricht test because of the budget deficit and national debt.

Mr. Schopflin said: "At the end of the day, it looks as though Austrians came down for what they knew, rather than for change, which is consonant with the kind of country Austria is."

Peres unveils Syria points

(Continued from page 1)

proposal included a demand that Syria guarantee an end to attacks on Israel by the pro-Iranian Hezbollah guerrilla movement based in Lebanon.

Mr. Peres outlined the understanding as follows:

— No preconditions will be set by either side.

— The talks' aims, not manner, are what is important.

Here Mr. Peres said that while Israel still wanted "to open negotiations with a summit between the president of Syria and the prime minister of Israel... it is not a condition." Syria has so far refused to raise the talks to senior political echelons.

— The content of the negotiations would influence how long they last and their results.

— There was a differentiation between "issues which are a point of contention and those which require resolution."

Mr. Peres said, for example, the final border was in contention water and security arrangements simply had to be resolved.

Sheikh Sabah retracts resignation

(Continued from page 1)

and the most senior government spokesman in parliament debates.

Asked by Al Qahas whether rumours he had offered his resignation were true, Sheikh Sabah was quoted as replying: "This talk has plenty of truth in it."

"It is a result of difference

— Negotiations were to be conducted on all subjects.

— Ways to turn the Golan Heights into a centre of economic cooperation rather than of military confrontation would be sought.

— A central role would be required of the United States.

— Preserving quiet on Israel's border with Lebanon was a goal.

Mr. Peres has declined to say how an agreement would deal with the 14,000 Israeli Jews who live on the Golan Heights. It is premature to discuss that, he told reporters this week.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of Israel's opposition Likud Party, criticised Mr. Peres' approach. "When you go down from the Golan Heights it can open a future war," he told Israel Channel Two television.

He said Mr. Peres was paving the way for Syria to return to the shores of the Sea of Galilee. "With this, peace will not come," Mr. Netanyahu said.

Polls show a majority of Israelis agree. Mr. Peres has said an accord would be submitted to them in the form of a referendum.

Despair assails Palestinians trapped in a gilded cage

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace agreement with Israel has left two former fighters abandoned in a U.N.

no man's land. Robert Fisk reports

across the Jordan River to the occupied West Bank not long after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, and Mr. Al Gulani 10 years for driving a carload of explosives near Israeli-occupied Ramallah — both men were turned back by Lebanese soldiers the moment they were expelled across the Israeli border last April.

Back in the spring they thought a few complaints from the U.N. would secure their future. Their expulsion by Israel to Lebanon, in contravention of Articles 45 and 49 of the Geneva Convention, could surely be reversed.

Prematurely old at 58 and with a quarter-century of Israeli jails behind him, Mr. Khodr, a PLO loyalist who would now like to go to Gaza, is in no state to take

up arms again. Besides, the peace agreement with Israel means history has passed him by. Mr. Al Gulani would be content merely to join his brother Omar in Jordan. But the Israelis refused both men permission to re-enter the border, claiming they were still security threats. Jordan then announced that Mr. Al Gulani was a threat to its own security.

When humanitarian workers tried to arrange a family visit from Omar to Mohammad Al Gulani, the Lebanese refused him permission to pass through their territory from Jordan; Lebanon was still technically at war with Israel, they said. Now that Amman had made peace with Tel Aviv, he could surely travel through Israel. But the

Israelis refused. Omar called each day, to the phone in the U.N.'s military police guardroom, but had nothing to say to encourage his brother.

By mid-summer, the Arab, Israeli and Western journalists who trooped to the U.N. headquarters to interview the two Palestinians, had, like the rest of the world, forgotten them. In desperation, Mr. Al Gulani wrote a personal letter to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, pleading with him to help them. Mr. Arafat had given his permission for both of us to move to Gaza, but the Israelis had vetoed our going there on the grounds of security. That's all. Nothing else. And we are still here.

Mr. Khodr is building a cement wall for the U.N. soldiers, partly to show his gratitude for their personal kindness, while Mr. Al Gulani wanders the camp, buying clothes and shoes at the PX store, watching a movie on Irish history given him by Irish troops, playing football and chess with his U.N. protectors, receiving a monthly joint stipend, of

£300 shared with Mr. Khodr from the local PLO office up the Lebanese coast in Rashidya.

The two Palestinians listen to the Arabic service of the BBC and Israeli radio.

When Mr. Khodr suffered a hernia the U.N. operated on him. They have tried to cure Mr. Al Gulani's ear infection and asthma, but the two Palestinians suffer the twin curse of international generosity and personal despair.

"Of course we get angry, because we want to start new lives," Mr. Al Gulani says.

"We have served our sentences. We have paid for what we did for the PLO. Now the PLO has made peace with Israel, but we are here without a future. Why? I get angry, even at the U.N. They want to send a guard with me wherever I go. They are kind, but what can I do?"

It was one of their United Nations' protectors who found the right words to describe Mr. Khodr and Mr. Al Gulani. "Political ghosts" is what he called them.

The Independent

No Crown Prince visit in January, Israel says

(Continued from page 1)

come after the Holy Month, which ends in late February. He declined to elaborate except that the Crown Prince would be contacting Israeli "social, economic, political and cultural institutions" whenever he chooses to make the visit.

It will be the first official visit of any member of the Royal Family to Israel. His Majesty King Hussein and Prince Hassan went to Israel last month but the visits came in connection with the death of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The King attended the assassinated prime minister's funeral in West Jerusalem on Nov. 6, and the Crown Prince went to Israel one day later to pay condolences to the Israeli leadership and the Rabin

"We are coming with open minds and open hearts for talks to close ranks with our brothers, and we hope a positive outcome will result," said Mr. Abu Hamdan, the Hamas representative in the Iranian capital Tehran.

He added, however: "Our position is clear. We are not participating in elections under the Israeli occupation."

In comments to the Jordan Times on Monday, Ambassador Shamir rejected all suggestions that political considerations were behind Friday's incident at the King Hussein Bridge where Israel refused entry to the Jordanian group which wanted to visit Nablus.

The group was not in touch with Israeli authorities but handled the applications (for entry permit) through

least 20 members of Parliament, university presidents and professors, journalists, municipal counsellors and independent personalities.

Columnists suggested that Israel had deliberately denied entry to the group because it did not want a high-profile Jordanian visit to Nablus or that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was somehow behind the denial because he perceived the visit as politically oriented.

Mr. Masri, who was one of the coordinators of the visit, said the group, many of whose members have close ties with Nablus, had only wanted to "show the world the close relationship between Jordanians and Palestinians."

The incident drew heavy anti-Israeli criticism in the Jordanian press, with newspapers carrying numerous articles and editorial comments assailing the Jewish state.

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Cabinet approves key foreign ownership law

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuter

AMMAN — Jordan has approved a law allowing wider foreign ownership and direct entry into its stock market to help attract foreign capital, the finance minister said Sunday.

"This system is an easy, transparent system which provides the opportunity for substantial foreign investment, and along with a reduced tax system, it will enhance the return on stock," Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh told Reuter.

Mr. Jardaneh said the Cabinet Saturday approved two laws on foreign ownership, including a regulation allowing direct foreign entry into the stock market.

The laws eliminate cumbersome prior approvals by the Cabinet, permit purchases through licensed brokers

and set ownership limits. They also provide tax exemptions for investment in less developed regions in Jordan.

"As for the stock market, it will be possible for a foreign investor to buy directly, on condition the foreign ownership in publicly listed company does not exceed 50 per cent at the end of close of trade in the official market," Mr. Jardaneh said.

Most foreign investment in the more than 100 listed firms in Amman Financial Market has been on hold awaiting the new law.

However, there has been strong foreign interest with funds obtaining previous permission to invest hundreds of millions of dollars.

"This system is very transparent and easy and addresses investors' complaints that the regulations were not easy," Mr. Jardaneh said.

Pakistan lags on human development — World Bank

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan is failing to lift its health and literacy levels to those achieved by poorer nations, according to a World Bank report.

The bank's Pakistan Poverty Assessment Report, completed in September, acknowledged that the proportion of poor people in the population had fallen in the 1970s and 1980s.

Pakistan had about 38.7 million people below the poverty line — defined as a per capita income of about \$50 — in 1990/91, compared to about 43.6 million in 1984/85, it said.

But "human development indicators" for a population estimated at 128 million in mid-1994/95 were lagging far behind.

"Pakistan's performance in important human development indicators has been the Achilles' Heel of the country's development effort," said Hugo Diaz, the World Bank's senior country economist for Pakistan, who prepared the report.

"Without sustained gains in health status and accumulation of skills, continued growth in labour productivity and incomes will not be possible," he said in a statement.

The report said Pakistan, with a per capita gross national product (GNP) of \$420 in 1992, trailed behind human development averages for all low-income countries, despite some progress in closing the gap.

The report said access to education, health and family planning remained limited, especially among poor rural women and girls. Services were often not provided or were of low quality. There was little accountability and government resource allocations were too low to provide adequate services.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Social Action Programme, which seeks to tackle these shortcomings, had made "considerable progress," but its achievements remained fragile, it said.

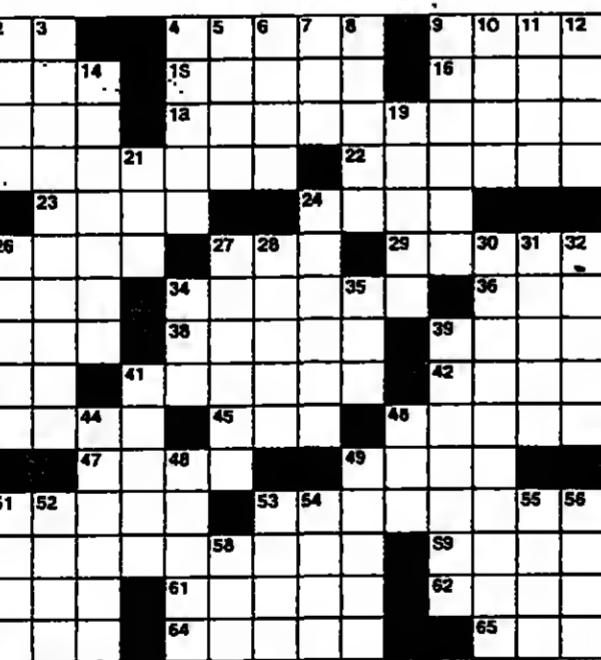
The report urged the government to deepen its economic and institutional reforms, strengthen its social safety net and develop a long-term strategy for financing social services.

It should foster sustained agricultural growth to alleviate rural poverty, improve access to basic services in slums and strengthen programmes targeting women, address child labour issues and enhance its monitoring of poverty, the report said.

THE Daily Crossword by Bernice Gordon

ACROSS
1 Foot
4 Ground swell
9 Sign at a street crossing
13 "— plenty o'..."
15 Group of scouts
16 Sheltered bay
17 Kind of guide
18 Steinbeck novel
20 With keen judgment
22 Blood bank suppliers
23 Red deer
24 Sassy
25 Tear away
27 Org. for Nicklaus
29 "Lou Grant"
33 Damage
34 Home to Harald V
36 Mouths
37 River in Austria
38 African antelope
39 Pack tightly
40 Pipe
41 Pilches
42 — boy!
43 Succinct
45 Mr. Koppel
46 Loathe
47 Loyal
49 Just
50 South American
53 Knowledge
57 Author of "The Shoes of the Fisherman"
59 — eye
60 Blueprint
61 Wipe clean
62 Tissue
63 Kitchen herb
64 Small children
65 Cincinnati pro

DOWN
1 Type of bread
2 Selves
3 Scarlet O'Hara
4 Spirited horse
5 Caspian Sea feeder
6 Promising
7 Achieved



Yesterday's puzzle solved:

L	I	M	A	C	R	U	S	T	E	W
A	R	E	S	I	N	A	H	A	R	E
F	U	S	S	A	T	B	A	L	C	O
S	B	A	S	T	E	A	C	O	R	T
N	A	F	U	A	L	E	R	T	H	E
A	S	N	A	E	R	T	E	A	R	E
F	A	S	E	N	E	R	A	N	R	E
E	U	E	D	E	N	E	R	A	R	E
R	D	M	P	Y	O	D	E	T	R	E
M	Y	O	D	E	T	R	E	A	R	E
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P	E	R	A	E	R	A	E	A	R	E
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Microsoft and NBC to start all news cable channel

NEW YORK (R) — In a move aimed at capturing new audiences well into the 21st century, Microsoft billionaire chairman Bill Gates and NBC have said they were forming a 24-hour cable television news channel and internet-based online service.

"Today NBC and Microsoft have come together to create news for the next millennium," said NBC president Bob Wright, as he announced "one of our other kept secrets" — a joint venture that marries NBC's top TV network with the world's biggest software company.

The venture has been a subject of intense media speculation for weeks and is the first of final officials in Microsoft

Corp. and NBC's parent company General Electric Co. hope will be many more joint projects in cyberspace.

The new 24-hour-a-day cable channel will compete with Ted Turner's Cable News Network (CNN), which has had a virtual monopoly on the all-news cable market for the past 15 years.

ABC last week announced plans to form an all-news cable network in 1997, but the NBC-Microsoft project will be launched in six months and will start by using a cable channel — NBC's "America's talking" — that is already in existence.

Mr. Wright said he expected the new cable service to have between 25

million and 35 million viewers by the end of 1996, compared to CNN's 67 million viewers. ABC's main obstacle in putting together an all-news channel is finding a distribution network.

Mr. Wright also said he did not expect developing the two new services to have any "unique" negative impact on NBC earnings for 1996, but he said that a greater staff is needed for both services.

A CNN spokesman, Steve Haworth, said the Microsoft-NBC project sounded a lot like what CNN was already doing. CNN's news pages on the worldwide web are already ready by an estimated three million people a day, he said.

NBC and Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft, said that NBC will handle news gathering for the joint venture, as well as for the Microsoft Network, the nascent online subscription service that Microsoft launched this year and which is also migrating to the Internet.

Microsoft will invest \$220 million over the next five years for its 50 per cent stake in the cable television venture, MSNBC Cable. In addition, the two companies also will invest another \$200 million over the next five years to develop the cable news venture.

The second venture will be called MSNBC Online, they said, an interactive service that will offer text, graphics, television pictures, photos and sound — through technology designed by Microsoft.

Mr. Wright said advances in digital technology will give people new control over news and information and added that online viewers will be able to customise their service to get the news they wanted, in whatever depth they needed.

"No network has ever offered news coverage of such breadth and depth before," Mr. Wright said.

Mr. Gates, whose comments were beamed to the New York news conference from Hong Kong, added, "one of the key

things is that both of the companies are saying we believe in the world of interactivity but we're bringing this world into broadcast."

"We'll be working with NBC to create innovative interactive news content and an integrated media experience," he added.

Mr. Wright said NBC will manage the cable network and the two com-

panies will cooperate in managing the interactive network.

The news service will be developed to integrate news delivery among broadcast, cable and the Internet computer network, the companies said in a news release.

The operation will combine NBC's international news organisation, its business news networks, its local affiliates and its mass audience delivery, along with Microsoft's technology and software expertise, its brand name and its connection to the personal computer user.

Jack Welch, chairman of NBC's parent, General Electric (G.E.), said, "this is a big deal for G.E. because commerce is never going to be the same in the next decade."

DAILY BRIEF
A review of news from the Arabic press

RJ generates JD 24.2m operating profit

★★ ROYAL JORDANIAN (RJ) will announce specific measures before the end of this month to resolve the problem of internal and external debts which amount to about JD 500 million (\$700 million). RJ Director-General Nader Dhababi told the Arabic dailies. Internally, the government will consider transferring RJ debts to the Jordan Petroleum Refinery into an equity, and raise RJ's capital and restructuring the debts to some international banks. Additional measures include transferring some losing RJ offices to general agents.

Mr. Dhababi said RJ made a JD 24.2 million operational profit in 1995, a 68.1 per cent increase over the figure of 1994. He noted that November was the best month of the year in terms of sales. Other major achievements in 1995 showed an increase in passenger traffic by 4.5 per cent and a growth of 21.2 per cent in total cargo traffic over 1994 levels. Cargo services traffic showed an improvement of 43.4 per cent over last year and 6.8 per cent over target. Majid Sabri, vice-president for marketing and sales, announced that RJ's stations in Bahrain, Cairo, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Muscat, New York, Riyadh and Tunis have successfully achieved their targets in 1994.

As for next year, Mr. Dhababi said, "We have to keep the projected seat factor at about 70.7 per cent and load factor at 63.5 per cent, not that it is the break-even or near break-even point, but I am confident that we have adequate traffic potential in our market to justify it. provided we do not let the competition get away with it. Therefore, a growth of 12.0 per cent in passenger traffic target and 15.4 per cent in excess baggage, 13.3 per cent in cargo and 13.7 per cent in mail has been earmarked for 1996. I am confident these are realisable figures considering the new route and the additional frequencies as well as the expected upsurge of tourist, business and projected traffic to Jordan." In other words, RJ hopes to be able to carry 1,426,988 passengers next year, compared to 1,273,957 this year, and to earn a total of \$381.77 million in 1996 (Al Rai + Al Dustour).

Jordanian workforce estimated at nearly 930,000 workers

★★ THE MINISTER of labour told the Lower House's Financial Committee that the total number of Jordanians in the labour force is about 930,000. Jordanian expatriates number about 250,000, the minister said. He estimated the number of non-Jordanians in the local market at 288,000 of whom 42,000 have annual residence permits. The rest are Egyptians (188,000), Syrians (31,000) and Iraqis (9,000). Out of the total number of non-Jordanian labourers, 102,000 have regularised their status by obtaining work permits, the minister said pointing out that 70,000 have voluntarily left the Kingdom over the past three months (Al Rai + Al Dustour).

Darwazeh: Prices of Petroleum products, electricity and gas will not be raised

★★ ENERGY AND MINERAL Resources Minister Sami Darwazeh has affirmed that there will not be any increase in the prices of petroleum products next year and that the government is committed to keeping current prices of these products unchanged. He further affirmed that there will not be any increase in electricity charges and that rumours about the government's intention to raise gas prices is totally unfounded. The minister denied that there is a shortage of gas supplies and pointed out that the Jordan Petroleum Refinery sells nearly 1,000 tonnes a day. He noted that the government imports gas from Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq and that Jordan's consumption during summer months does not exceed 400 tonnes a day (Al Rai + Al Dustour).

Financial Markets in co-operation with **Cairo Amman Bank**

U.S. Dollar in International Markets	
Currency	New York Close Date: 15/12/95
Sterling Pound	1.5346 1.5589**
Deutsche Mark	1.4433 1.4398
Swiss Franc	1.1634 1.1611**
French Franc	4.9655 4.9520**
Japanese Yen	105.03 101.67
European Currency Unit	1.2735 1.2755**

** Bid For Yen
** Bid For D.M. in 1000 U.S. Dollars, 1.000000000 equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 18.12.1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7060	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0885	1.0945
Deutsche Mark	0.4913	0.4936
Swiss Franc	0.0389	0.0399
French Franc	0.1427	0.1434
Japanese Yen	0.6983	0.6979
Dutch Guilder	0.4384	0.4411
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira	0.0443	0.0446
Belgian Franc	*****	*****

For 100

Other Currencies Date: 18.12.1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.3820	1.3760
Lebanese Lira	0.043750	0.044320
Saudi Riyal	0.1670	0.1695
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.5070	2.5070
Qatari Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2100	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.8330	1.8410
UAE Dirham	0.1427	0.1433
Greek Drachma	0.1485	0.1515
Cypriot Pound	1.5225	1.5380

For 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

ONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets today.

ne U.S. dollar	1.3720/30	Canadian dollar	Deutschmarks
1.4402/12	1.6128/38	Dutch guilders	Swiss francs
1.1602/12	29.60/64	Belgian francs	French francs
4.9512/62	6.5930/30	Italian lire	Japanese yen
1593.3/4.8	6.3590/40	Swedish crowns	Norwegian crowns
101.87/97	5.5767/76	Danish crowns	Singapore dollars
7.745/20	1.4154/64	Australian dollars	Hong Kong dollars
7.7345/55	1.5245/55		
ne sterling	\$1.5376/86		
old (ounce)	\$386.70/387.20		

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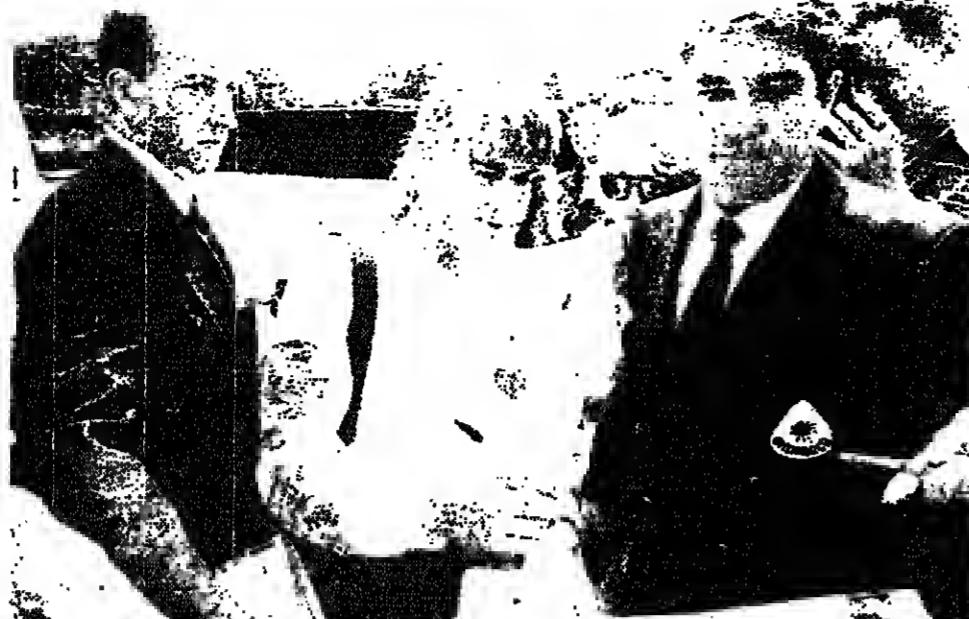
Steffi Graf cleared of tax fraud

BONN (AFP) — Steffi Graf will not be pursued on tax fraud charges, as investigators are now convinced she knew nothing of her father's handling of her fortune, *Der Spiegel* claimed in its latest edition to be published Monday.

The German tennis star, whose father Peter Graf has been detained since August following irregularities in her tax affairs, has twice been interviewed by investigators.

But the weekly news magazine said they now believe Peter Graf kept his daughter in the dark about the full extent of her fortune.

Quoting an interview with



Security guards keep a close eye on Steffi Graf at a tournament earlier this year. Graf has reportedly earned \$128 million in her career (file photo).

tax officials, the magazine published the tennis player's reply to the question "Did you ever ask your father about the extent of your personal fortune?"

She said: "I only remember a conversation we had about two three years ago, when he said it was 18 million

marks (\$12.3 million). I thought that didn't sound like a huge amount, but it didn't bother me."

However, *Der Spiegel* claimed that her actual earnings at that time were more like 80 million marks (\$57.5 million) to 120 million marks (\$86 million).

An application for bail made by Peter Graf's lawyers is to be heard on Wednesday.

Afghanistan accepts Atlanta invitation

LAUSANNE (AFP) — Afghanistan's National Olympic Committee has accepted the International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) invitation to compete in next summer's XXVII Olympic Games in Atlanta.

An IOC statement Monday put Afghanistan's late reply down to "communication problems." The IOC had originally fixed a November 19 deadline for accepting the invite.

Only North Korea of the 197 National Olympic Committees affiliated to the IOC has yet to reply.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Boli bound for Japan

MONACO (AFP) — AS Monaco defender Basile Boli has signed a two-year contract with Japanese J-League side Urawa Red Diamonds, his club said Monday. No fee was mentioned for the 29-year-old former Glasgow Rangers man, who scored the goal which won the European Cup for Olympique Marseille in 1993. The player, who has more than 45 full French caps, only arrived at Monaco last summer.

Le Saux out with triple injury

LONDON (R) — Graeme Le Saux's chances of playing in next summer's European Championship finals looked bleak on Monday after his agent said he had suffered a triple injury to his right leg. The England defender was in hospital after being carried off during Blackburn's 1-0 victory over Middlesbrough at Ewood Park on Saturday where he landed awkwardly while making a challenge on Brazilian Juninho. His agent Jonathon Holmes confirmed on Monday that the player had broken his tibia, dislocated his ankle and torn a tendon in his right leg. England coach Terry Venables, speaking in Birmingham after Sunday's European championship draw, admitted his plans for the competition had been upset by the injury to Le Saux. "Losing Graeme is a big blow for us. We've missed him being out of the team for the last two games through injury and I thought he was just about getting himself right," Venables said.

Women's pole vault record improves

PERTH (AP) — Emma George of Australia bettered her own women's world pole vault record Sunday night, clearing 4.28 metres (14 foot 1/2 inch) at an invitation track and field meet. George, 21, failed in three subsequent efforts at 4.41 metres (14 foot 5 1/2 inches). The previous mark of 4.25 metres (13 foot 11 1/4 inches) was set by George in Melbourne late last month. George has previously competed as a sprinter and long jumper and only switched to the pole vault a year ago. The event will not be contested at the Atlanta Olympics but will be on the programme for the 1997 World Indoor Championships, and will be considered for inclusion in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Pirates given easy draw

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Newly crowned African club champions Orlando Pirates have been handed an easy draw in defence of their title next year. The South Africans won the continent's top club prize on Saturday with a 1-0 victory (3-2 aggregate) against Asec Abidjan in the Ivory Coast capital. Pirates, the first sub-Saharan team to win the Champions Cup in 12 years, will open their defence next March against the winner of the preliminary round tie between Majantja of Lesotho and St. Denis, from the island of Reunion.

Tunisia's Etoile looking to sparkle

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Tunisian club Etoile du Sahel will begin their defence of the African Football Confederation Cup with a match against modest Entente Sotrac-Ouakam in Senegal.

Etoile followed in the footsteps of Nigeria's Shooting Stars and Bendel Insurance and Stella Abidjan of the Ivory Coast this month by lifting a trophy named after jailed Nigerian politician Moshood Abiola.

The first leg of the decider against Kaloum Stars in Guinea finished goalless and two first-half goals from rising star Imed Ben Younes in Sousse ensured victory for the red-shirted local club.

Now Etoile must try and end a jinx which has seen Stars and Bendel fall at the first hurdle in defence of the title while Stella never even got a chance because Ivorian clubs were barred due to crowd violence.

Young playmaker Zoubeir Béa will be a key figure for the Tunisians, who have a Brazilian coach and a squad that includes several players from the South American country and one from Russia.

Senegal have been missing from Africa for several years because of financial problems.

After shunning the competition for national championship runners-up since its inception in 1992, Morocco have entered Kawkeb Marrakech, who confront National Guard of Mauritania.

Tyson, Bruno await March 16 bout

PHILADELPHIA (R) — The hype for the Mike Tyson-Frank Bruno title fight in March officially began on Sunday with Bruno trotting out a Britain versus United States theme.

Bruno appeared to be chomping at the bit to fight Tyson, especially after seeing what the Briton said was much rust in Tyson's performance on Saturday when the former champion, his timing way off, finally knocked out Buster Mathis Jr. in the third round.

"I'm going to fly the flag for England. I'm an ambassador for boxing," said Bruno who was stopped by Tyson in the fifth round in 1989.

"I'm a different man from before. I'm mentally better. You'll see on March 16th," said Bruno, the World Boxing Council champion.

Tyson "looked a bit rusty here and there. I'm not going to get involved in a slugging match. These are going to be my judges," said Bruno, holding up his fists.

In response to a question, Bruno said he saw "quite a few (mistakes on Tyson's part on Saturday), but I'm not going to talk about it."

"We'll find out March 16th how rusty I am," Tyson said. "This is going to be great. I'm looking forward dearly to it."

Bruno praised Tyson and then stuck a verbal knife into him, as Bruno had done earlier this week to other heavyweight champions.

"I have the utmost respect for Tyson, but when I get in the ring, I won't have one ounce of respect," said Bruno, who went on to heap praise on himself for being such a good ambassador for boxing, citing his large following of fans in Britain, especially children.

Bruno praised Tyson for emerging from prison last March, after three years on a conviction for rape, with a belief in the Muslim faith.

But Bruno criticised the people surrounding the former undisputed heavyweight champion, saying, "it's ridiculous, the guy he has around him ... shouting, doing all kinds of things."

Bruno was referring to the small army of people always around Tyson and one particularly loud-mouthed camp follower who shouts innane remarks, such as "wake up, wake up this is a fight. Yeah, yeah wake up it's fight time," in the middle of the day, whenever there are more than a handful of people present.

Atletico stay top with last-minute victory

MADRID (AP) — Jose Luis Caminero scored with two minutes remaining Sunday, breaking a scoreless duel and giving Atletico Madrid a 1-0 victory at Valencia to remain atop the Spanish League by two points.

Caminero's goal came despite the ejection of Atletico defender Delfi Gelli just a minutes before for a hard tackle.

Argentine striker Leonardo Angel Biagioni beat his defender down the right side, stopped and sent a sharp cross onto the left foot of the streaking Caminero.

Keeper Andoni Zubizarreta, who had stopped several shots earlier, dove but was beaten by Caminero, who scored his third of the season after being badly shaken up in the first half on a narrowly missed header.

For Atletico (12-3-2), the victory was another response to its critics who have been predicting the club's demise all season. After trouncing Barcelona at home last week, Valencia's victory at 8-3-6 Valencia showed the club can win on the road, where both of its losses have come.

RCD Espanyol kept pace with Atletico, beating Oviedo 2-1 to improve to 11-4-2 and remain in second. Compostela likewise stayed with Atletico, beating racing 2-0 to remain in fourth six points back.

Barcelona beat sporting Gijon 1-0 on Saturday to remain in fourth, two behind Espanyol and two ahead of Compostela. Betis lost some ground in a 1-1 draw with cross-town rival Sevilla on Saturday.

Elsewhere Sunday, it was: Albacete 3, Tenerife 1; Salamanca 3, Real Sociedad 3; Real Madrid 1, Celta 0; Deportivo La Coruna 6, Rayo Vallecano 0; Zaragoza 5, Valladolid 3; and Athletic Bilbao 1, Merida 1.

Espanyol 2, Oviedo 1: At Oviedo, Yugoslavian midfielder Goran Bogdanovic scored with six minutes remaining to give Espanyol its third victory in four road games.

Florin Raducioiu's gave Espanyol the lead in the 28 minute but Carlos Munoz tied the game for Oviedo (5-5-7) just before halftime off a feed from Slovakian Pet Dubovsky.

Real Madrid 1, Celta 0: At Madrid, 19-year-old Alvaro Villar scored his first Spanish first-division goal with a spinning move at the top of the penalty area in the 32nd minute to give Real its eighth victory of the season (8-4-5).

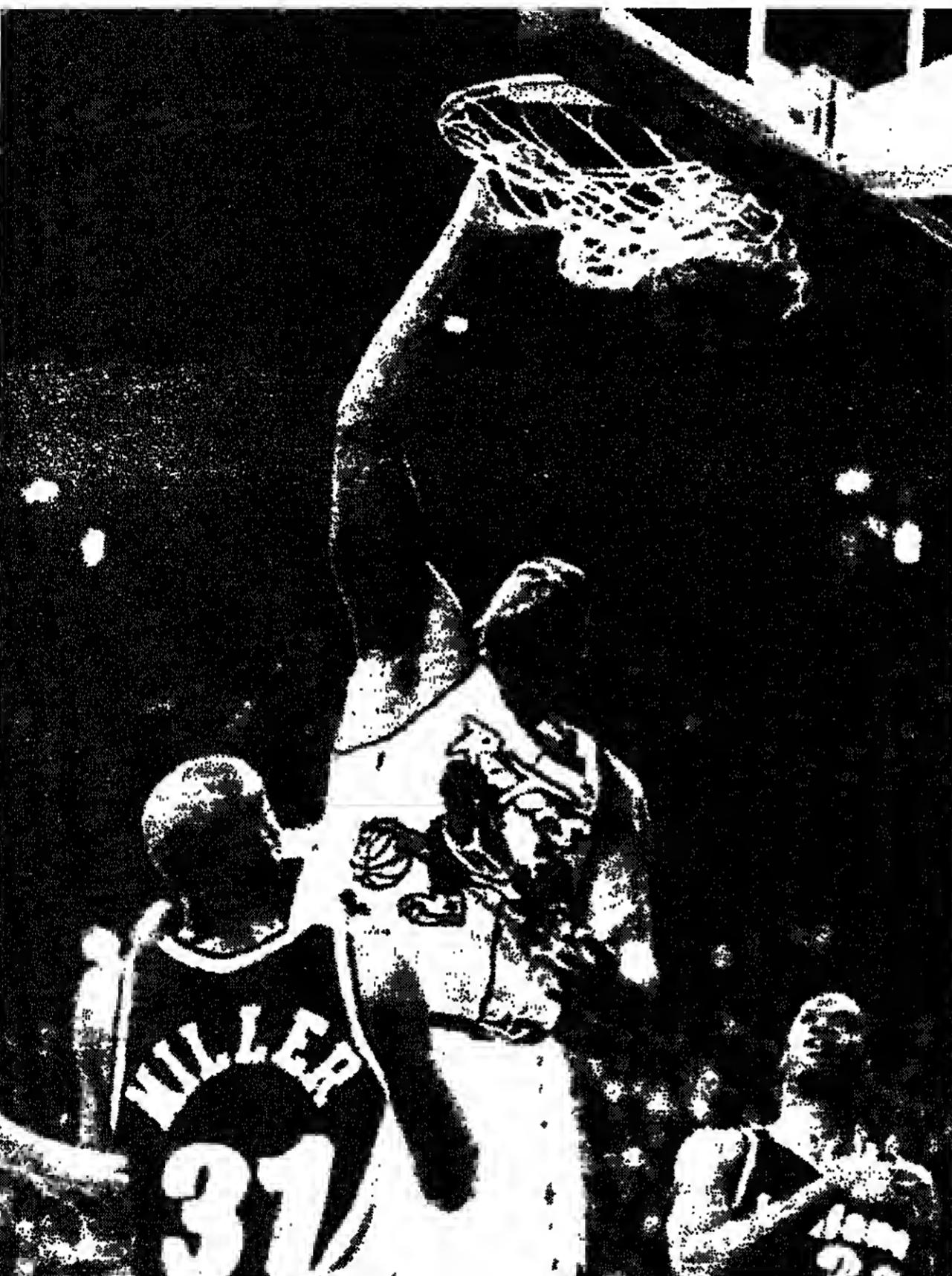
Recent acquisition Dejan Petkovic from Yugoslavia had to make up for the absence of Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano, still nursing a groin pull, and Danish midfielder Michael Laudrup.

Albacete 3, Tenerife 1: In the Canary Islands, Croatian midfielder Nenad Bjelica scored his fifth and sixth goals of the season to lead Albacete to only its fourth victory of the season (4-4-9).

Antonio Pinilla gave Tenerife the lead in the 22nd minute before Bjelica put Albacete ahead with goals in the 27th and 61st minutes.

Deportivo 6, Rayo Vallecano 0: In Madrid, six different players scored for Deportivo, including Bebeto with his league-leading 13th, and Donato as La Coruna won its seventh (7-3-7).

The loss was a league-worst 11th for Rayo (4-2-11), which stayed two points ahead of Valladolid.



Toronto Raptors' centre Oliver Miller (centre) slams in a basket in front of Indiana Pacers' guard Reggie Miller (left) and Antonio Davis (right) during first half NBA action in Toronto (Reuters photo)

Raptors score surprising win over Magic

TORONTO (R) — Damon Stoudamire scored 21 points and Alvin Robertson added 20 as the expansion Toronto Raptors thoroughly outplayed the powerful Orlando Magic for a 110-93 victory on Sunday.

Troy Murray added nine to his 10 points in a decisive 24-3 first-half burst to help the Raptors end a three-game losing streak and beat a team with a winning record for only the second time.

"They beat us in every phase of the game tonight," Magic coach Brian Hill said. "Offensive execution, defensive intensity, they got to the line more. They were by far the better team tonight."

Shaquille O'Neal, playing his second game of the season, scored 32 points and Penny Hardaway added 18 to pace the Magic attack.

Stoudamire's basket with 38 seconds left in the first quarter sparked the key 24-5 run over the next six minutes.

"Damon played 45 minutes. He was as fresh in the 45th minute as in the first," said Raptors coach Brendan Malone.

Toronto opened its largest lead at 80-56 lead entering the final period and the

Magic got no closer than the final margin.

In Milwaukee, Lee Mayberry and Terry Cummings came off the bench to score 16 and 15 points, respectively, as the Bucks avenged a Friday blowout with an 84-80 victory over the Indiana Pacers.

The Bucks snapped a three-game losing streak and avenged Friday's 112-95 loss to Indiana in the opener of a home-and-home series.

"Obviously, this was our best defensive effort of the year," Bucks coach Mike Dunleavy said. "It was a situation where we were embarrassed by a team on Friday and came back tonight against the same team for a win."

Reggie Miller scored 17 points and Mark Jackson added 16 for Indiana, which saw a four-game winning streak end.

In Cleveland, Dan Majerle

and Terrell Brandon each scored 20 points as the Cavaliers reached the .500 mark for the first time this season with a 92-79 victory over the undermanned Denver Nuggets.

Brandon had just six points after three quarters but scored 14 of Cleveland's final 19 points.

The Cavaliers have won four of their last five games and 11 of 15 since opening the season 0-7.

Don MacLean scored 26 points for the injury-plagued Nuggets, who suited up just eight players.

The Nuggets missed their first 13 three-point attempts.

At Minnesota, Vernon Maxwell scored 30 points and Clarence Weatherspoon added 22 points and 11 rebounds as the Washington Bullets ran their winning streak to five with a 112-100 victory over the Trail Blazers.

The Bullets improved to 11-10 to get over the .500 mark for the first time since November of 1994.

Chris Webber and Juwan Howard added 19 points apiece and Robert Pack had 12 points and 14 assists for the Bullets.

Portland was led by Cliff

ford Robinson, who scored 24 points after being benched for the entire first quarter, and Arvydas Sabonis, who chipped in 20.

RESULTS

	Toronto	Orlando	Minnesota	Indiana	Denver	Portland
Toronto	110	93	99	80	79	100
Philadelphia	101	99	99	80	79	100
Milwaukee	84	80	99	80	79	100
Cleveland	92	79	99	80	79	100
Washington	112	100	99	80	79	100

Tunisia
Etoile
looking
to spark



Tottenham's Chris Armstrong leaps over Wimbledon's Kenny Cunningham during their premiership match at Selhurst Park (AFP photo)

Fowler double leaves United reeling

LIVERPOOL (AFP) — Two superbly taken goals by Liverpool's brilliant young striker Robbie Fowler dealt arch-rivals Manchester United's title hopes a major blow in a pulsating encounter at Anfield on Sunday.

Fowler struck at the end of each half to leave second-placed United trailing Newcastle — who beat Everton 1-0 on Saturday — by seven points going into the hectic Christmas programme.

Liverpool, whose run of poor form ended with a 1-0 victory at Bolton last week, dominated an explosive match from the outset but were denied an early breakthrough by some inspirational saves from United's goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel.

Danish star Schmeichel, returning to the side after an elbow operation, kept United

in the game with a string of top class saves as Liverpool poured forward in the first half.

But there was little he could do to deny Fowler his first goal in six games on the stroke of half-time when the England 'B' striker curled in a brilliant free-kick that left the Great Dane rooted to the goal-line as the ball whistled into his top right corner.

The goal was no more than Liverpool deserved as their fluent passing, imaginative running and greater tenacity in the tackle left United floundering.

"We were dreadful, absolutely dreadful in the first half," admitted United boss Alex Ferguson.

United made a better fist of it in the second-half but their inability to break down a composed Liverpool de-

fence forced Ferguson to take off seven million pound striker Andy Cole and send on the inexperienced Paul Scholes.

The match ebbed and flowed with chances coming at both ends. Eric Cantona forcing a smart save out of Liverpool's David James at one end and Collymore crashing a vicious shot against the cross bar at the other.

But three minutes from time Fowler sealed the three points for the Reds, who move up to fifth, when he cut inside the defence on the edge of the box and buried a low shot into a Schmeichel's left-hand corner.

Ferguson added later: "I think, particularly in the first half, that that was the most lifeless performance I've seen from us."

A closing ceremony in the main stadium was to feature 12,000 performers, a final gathering of the 3,200 athletes and a repeat of the spectacular fireworks display with which the games began.

The biggest sports event ever held in Southeast Asia, the Chiang Mai games were the seventh won by the Thais but only the second since Indonesia joined the grouping in 1977.

Indonesia's downfall was generally ascribed to a young, relatively inexperienced team, the Thai hometown advantage, and the excellent preparations of the winners.

The Indonesians have also had trouble matching the Thai team's depth. The hosts have entered 640 athletes here, nearly 120 more than Indonesia's contingent.

Thailand tops SEA Games table

CHIANG MAI (AP) — Already master of the 18th Asian Games, Thailand scored a final knockout on the closing day as its boxers put away opponents in 11 out of 12 final bouts.

Traditional Thai hospitality did not extend to the sports arenas here, as the insatiable hosts dethroned regional power Indonesia and demolished opponents in sporting ranging from athletics to yachting.

After nine days of competition, the climactic boxing wins propelled the final Thai gold count to 157, with Indonesia left far behind at 76. The Philippines was third ranked with 33 trailed by Malaysia with 31.

Singapore is taking home 26, Vietnam 10 and Burma five. There were no golds to go around for Brunei, Cambodia or Laos.

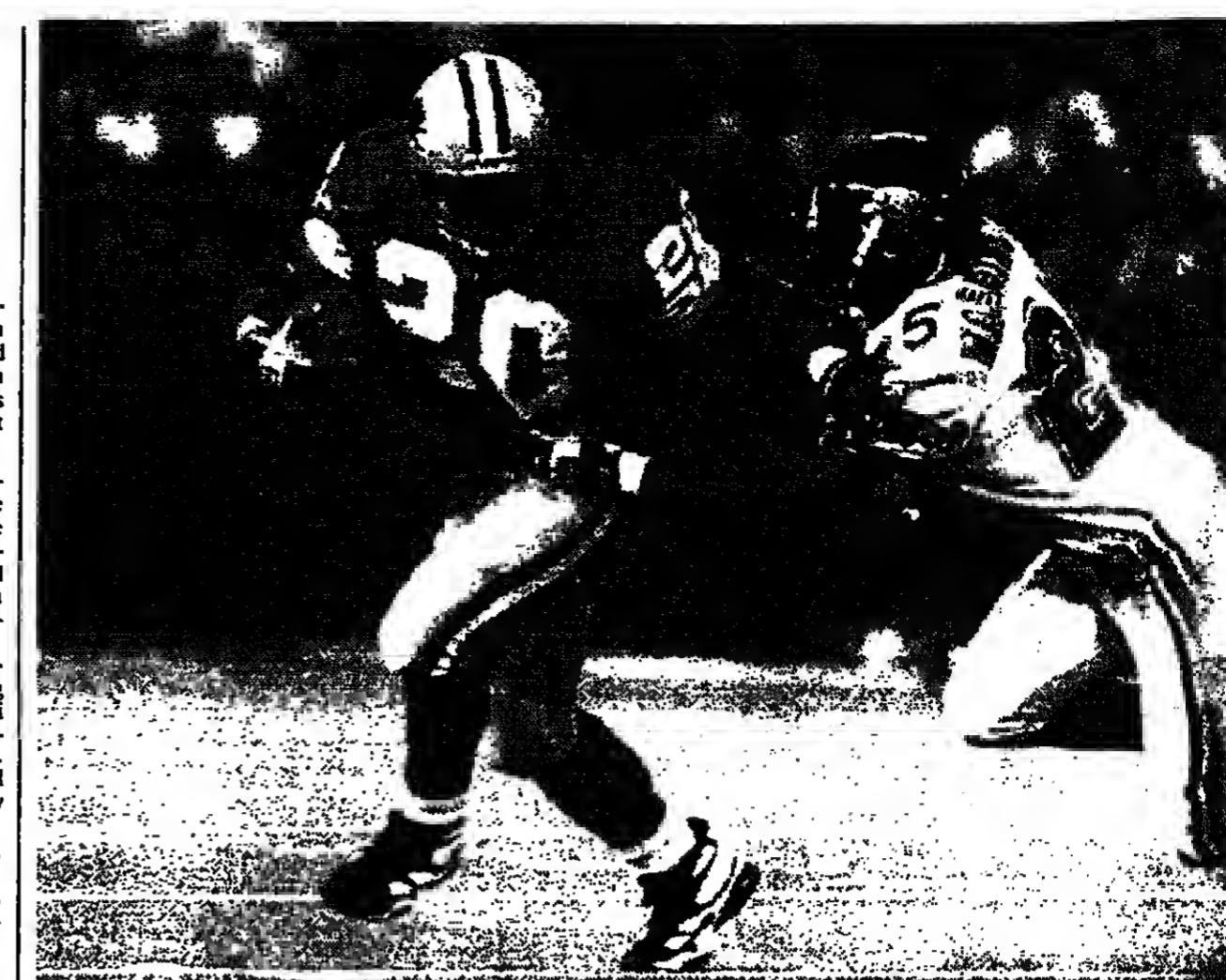
Also on the final day, Singapore emerged winners in men's water polo and the equestrian team three-day event. A Thai rider took the individual three-day competition, and the Thai sepak takraw team downed Singapore for gold in the regatta event.

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Silverdome. Detroit beat Jacksonville 44-0 (Reuters photo)

Bills win battle for AFC East

BUFFALO (AFP) — The Buffalo Bills, who failed to make the National Football League playoffs last season after four straight futile trips to the Super Bowl, beat Miami 23-20 Sunday to win the American Conference East division.

Linebacker David White's interception set up Steve Christie's 25-yard field goal with barely more than six minutes left as the Bills won the AFC East title for the sixth time in eight years.

Quarterback Thomas rushed for 148 yards and scored two touchdowns. The Bills are 41-2 during the regular season when Thomas runs for more than 100 yards.

"When he runs like that, it filters over to the line," said centre Kent Hull. "We block better. It makes our job awfully easy."

Miami's Dan Marino passed for 254 yards and a touchdown for Miami, but couldn't fend off a fourth loss in five road games.

Marino took advantage of a pair of turnovers to score 10 points in less than two minutes early in the third quarter.

Steve Emtman recovered Thomas' fumble at the Buffalo 33 to set up Steve Christie's 30-yard field goal and Marino connected with Eric Green for a 25-yard touchdown one play after Calvin Jackson returned an interception 23 yards.

The Bills regained the lead just before the third quarter ended on an 11-yard scoring toss from Jim Kelly to Thomas.

Kelly completed 16-of-28 passes for 139 yards, while Marino was 18-for-28 for 254 yards. The Dolphins were held to 42 rushing yards after

gaining 148 against Buffalo on October 29th. Marino also was sacked three times.

"We knew if we could stop the run, we could get after Dan," said Bills linebacker Bryce Paup. "We gave them a few new wrinkles."

At Dallas, the Cowboys posted a last-gasp 21-20 victory over the New York Giants as Chris Boniol kicked a 35-yard field goal as time expired.

It was Boniol's fifth field goal of the game and he welcomed the chance to show his mettle.

"I've been wanting one of these games," he said. "A five-for-five where you hit a game-winner. I was glad to finally get this chance."

Boniol's winning kick capped a 14-play, 58-yard drive which featured three third down conversions on pass completions by Troy Aikman.

"There was never a doubt, but, we had them all the way," said a relieved Cowboys coach Barry Switzer. "It was a real gut check."

The victory kept the Cowboys in sole possession of first-place in the National Conference East, one game ahead of Philadelphia.

Dallas had already earned a playoff berth, and can still earn home-field advantage throughout the playoffs if San Francisco loses one of its next two games and the Cowboys win their season finale at Arizona.

The near-miss was no joke to Aikman, who admitted the Cowboys would have to improve to stay on course for the Super Bowl.

"We're going to have to do a lot better than this if we're going to get very far," he said.

NFL RESULTS

	23	21	21	31	26	44	23	21	23	21	20
Buffalo											
Carolina											
Chicago											
Cleveland											
Detroit											
Houston											
Philadelphia											
Washington											
Miami											
Atlanta											
Tampa Bay											
Cincinnati											
Jacksonville											
NY Jets											
Arizona											
St. Louis											

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Israel 'clarifies' stand on Jordanian property

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israel has explained to Jordan that the issue of Jordanian-owned property in the occupied territories could be discussed only in the context of the broader negotiations on the status of refugees and cannot be addressed on a bilateral level, the Israeli ambassador to Jordan said Monday.

Ambassador Shimon Shamir also said the draft of the much-delayed transport agreement between Jordan and Israel is ready for signature, but the signing of the document is being delayed because of technical hitches in a separate but related accord on air services.

Mr. Shamir said the Jordanian government had approached the Israeli government to address the issue of property owned by Jordanians but which remain under Israeli control after the Jewish state occupied the West Bank, including Arab East Jerusalem, in the 1967 war.

The issue is an irritant for many Jordanians who argue that there is no reason for Israel to deny the property rights of Jordanians after Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in October 1994.

However, Ambassador Shamir said Israel had "clarified" to the Jordanian government that its interpretation of the peace treaty in this context is that from the day

the treaty was signed Jordanians were removed from the list of "citizens of enemy countries," clearing the way for them to own property in areas controlled by Israel.

"But the treaty is not retroactive," according to Israel's interpretation as explained by the ambassador. As such, "controversial law on absentee property" applies to all Jordanian property that went under Israeli control in 1967. In practical terms, this means that the issue would have to be dealt within the framework of Israeli-Palestinian final status negotiations scheduled to begin in May 1996.

No immediate Jordanian comment was available on the Israeli "clarification." On the status of bilateral agreements stipulated in the Oct. 26, 1994 peace treaty, Mr. Shamir said four other documents were also ready for signature, but they have to wait until after the transport accord is signed in line with the "order of signing" as stipulated in the treaty.

Mr. Shamir declined to be specific on the differences holding up the air services agreement except to say that they were "technical" and related to "airspace etc." He likewise did not provide a timeframe to the eventual signing of the accord.

According to Jordanian officials, one of the key difference is over the altitude that Israel is willing to allow

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Khartoum invites opposition to run for presidency

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Parliamentarians in Sudan, run by a military junta, say a framework bill for next year's presidential and general elections allows any national to campaign for the presidency, local papers reported Monday.

One member of the transitional national assembly, Ibrahim Al Tahir, declared that former premier Sadeq Al Mahdi and southern rebel leader John Garang should run for office, the press reports said.

Mr. Tahir, a legal advisor to junta leader General Omar Al Bashir, who ousted the democratically elected "Mahdi" in a coup in June 1989, said: "We call upon Sadeq Al Mahdi and John Garang to nominate themselves to the presidency and we will provide them with opportunities to speak to the voters to give their opinion."

He told Sunday's session of the assembly that the only condition for participation in politics would be "citizenship with no consideration of faith or culture."

General Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has been at war against successive regimes in Khartoum since 1983 to end domination of the mainly animist and Christian south of Sudan, Africa's largest country, by the Islamic Arabised north.

Justice Minister Abdul Aziz Shiddo said the constitutional decree bill sent general Bashir to the assembly for discussion would not bar any Sudanese from nominating himself to the presidency.

"We are not scared of the opposition and we invite them to nominate themselves as opponents of this regime," Mr. Shiddo said, claiming that the decree answered "allegations being raised about Sudan and is a measure of deepening the new democratic experiment being presented by Sudan."

Current parliamentary authorities are largely appointed bodies and the human rights record of the Muslim fundamentalist-backed regime has been criticised internationally. Washington has placed Sudan on its blacklist of countries accused of sponsoring state terrorism.

Mr. Shiddo said the bill was a basis for the country's permanent constitution.

Meanwhile, the president of the elections board, Abdul Monim Al Zein Al Nahas, quoted by Monday's Sudan Al Hadeeth daily, said any Sudanese aged 40 or over could run for the presidency on condition that he is nominated by 20 persons and had not been convicted of any major offence.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pakistan appoints new army chief

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Lieutenant General Jehangir Karamat has been appointed new chief of the Pakistani army, the official Associated Press of Pakistan reported Monday. He will replace General Abdul Waheed who is due to retire next month after a three-year tenure as chief of the half-a-million strong army. The appointment ends speculation as to whether Gen. Waheed would get an extension or otherwise who would succeed him. Gen. Waheed is credited with having kept the army afloat from politics in Pakistan, which has spent more than half of its 49 years since independence under military rule. An army chief is generally considered here as part of a de facto troika along with the president and prime minister.

Gonzalez to stand again for premier

MADRID (AFP) — Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez ended weeks of speculation on Monday by saying he would head the Socialist Party into parliamentary elections he called for next March. The Socialist Party executive announced it would propose Mr. Gonzalez to head the party's list in the poll. The party candidate will be officially designated by the party's federal committee on Friday, but Mr. Gonzalez was assured of a large majority. Mr. Gonzalez, who became prime minister in 1982, will be leading his party into legislative elections for the seventh consecutive time.

Allies divert dhows carrying Iraqi dates

DUBAI (AFP) — U.S. and allied ships in the Gulf have diverted 17 traditional wooden boats suspected of exporting dates from Iraq since November, a U.S. Navy spokesman said Monday. "The dhows were able to carry between 100 to 750 tonnes of dates each," Lieutenant Commander Hal Pittman said. U.S. Navy officials have said the dates are worth about \$500 per tonne or up to five times the price of diesel oil and the use of the dhows appeared to be a new tactic to slip by multilateral ships enforcing U.N. sanctions. In the past the Iraqis used large vessels like tankers, cargo ships and tug boats to try to bypass sanctions. Personnel on ships from the multilateral maritime interception force — which includes the United States, Britain, Italy, Belgium, Canada and the New Zealand — diverted the dhows to "different countries" in the region. They were to undergo further investigation and are dealt with under the U.N. sanctions and the laws of the country where they are berthed.

S. Arabia, Italy sign security accord

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi Arabia and Italy have signed a security accord to coordinate their efforts in the fight against terrorism, organised crime and drug smuggling. The accord was signed late Saturday by Saudi Arabia's interior minister, Prince Nayef, and his Italian counterpart Rinaldo Coronas. Prince Nayef, quoted by the official Saudi Press Agency late Saturday, said: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia... rejects being a base or a corridor for terrorism." Mr. Coronas said the accord also provides for the exchange of information and expertise, but gave no further details.

Gunmen attack Turkish candidate's home

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Gunmen opened fire on the home of an Islamist candidate in Turkey's general elections next weekend, injuring his son, police sources said on Monday. The assailants attacked Welfare Party (RP) candidate Hasmim Hasim's home in the outskirts of the southeastern city of Diyarbakir on Sunday night before escaping in a taxi, they said. Mr. Hasim's 17-year-old son was slightly injured. Police said several people had been detained in connection with the incident but gave no details.

U.N. envoy probes religious rights in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — A U.N. special envoy on religious rights, Abdul Fattah Amor, held more talks Monday on the situation of minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mr. Amor, who arrived Friday, met Justice Ministry officials as well as the leaders of religious minorities and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), informed sources said. He is expected to travel to the central city of Esfahan on Tuesday and then on to the northwestern city of Tabriz, where sizeable Armenian Christian communities live. Mr. Amor, the first U.N. human rights rapporteur to visit Iran in four years, has already met Iran's chief justice, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, and the deputy foreign minister for international affairs, Mohammad Javad Zarif. Iran said earlier this month that it would receive U.N. human rights rapporteurs but warned that any reports must be based on "facts."

Jordanian aircraft to fly at in its airspace.

The transport accord provides for the entry of Jordanian and Israeli vehicles to each other's territory and would launch direct bus and taxi routes between the two countries.

Since the signing of the peace treaty more than one year ago, Jordan and Israel have signed eight agreements on cooperation (tourism, energy, agriculture, security and combating drugs, boundaries, health, the environment and trade).

In addition to the transport accord, which is seen as key to the implementation of some of the already signed agreements, there are other pending accords, on science and technology, Aqaba-Eilat maritime borders and telecommunications.

"These four documents are also ready for signing, which could be done in one day in a ceremony after the transport accord is signed," said Mr. Shamir.

When the five accords are signed, the total of 13 accords "will form the infrastructure for close Jordanian-Israeli interaction," said the ambassador.

Mr. Shamir, who took office in mid-1995 as Israel's first ambassador to Jordan, said he expected the second year after the signing of the peace treaty to bring about

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PNA-HAMAS TALKS: Palestinian National Council (PNC) acting Speaker Salim Zanoun (right) shakes hands with Hamas representative Khaled Misbal before starting a meeting in Cairo on Monday on settling some of the differences between Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority (see page one) (AFP photo)

Government is likely to set up special anti-corruption panel

By Lola Keillani
Special to the Jordan Times

JORDAN — To demonstrate the Jordan's seriousness in its fight against corruption, the government intends to set up an anti-corruption commission to implement a national strategy against corruption, informed sources said Monday.

Although the government has not yet formally adopted the strategy, an informed source who on Monday met

with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker along with foreign experts in the fight against corruption, according to the source.

Sharif Zeid, in a speech delivered on his behalf by Muhibeen Touq, minister of administrative development, at a two-day meeting on corruption this week, reaffirmed the government's commitment to fight corruption at all levels.

During Monday's meeting the prime minister briefed foreign experts who took part in the seminar entitled "Integrity in Government" on

measures already adopted in Jordan to fight corruption and expressed genuine interest in adopting further action, the source said.

Experts from the United Kingdom, Uganda, Singapore, Bolivia, Hong Kong and the World Bank presented the prime minister with a short report about the outcome of the seminar and topics addressed by the participants.

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Armed resistance is a right, Sfeir asserts

By Lola Keillani
Special to the Jordan Times

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's Maronite patriarch, apparently expressing extreme frustration at the situation of the Christian minority, was quoted on Monday as saying armed resistance could be permissible against political tyranny.

Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, who is the last effective independent Christian voice in Lebanon, said in a Sunday sermon citizens must not obey an authority which "breaches moral codes, basic

human rights or the teachings of the Bible."

He then spelled out the conditions in which armed resistance was justifiable.

"Armed resistance against tyranny of the political authority is not legitimate except under the following conditions," Cardinal Sfeir was quoted by newspapers as saying.

The conditions were: "1. When there is definite, severe and continuous violation of basic rights. 2. When all

other measures to improve the situation have been exhausted. 3. When such (armed) resistance does not lead to a worse situation. 4. When there is hope of success. 5. When it is impossible to conceive a better solution."

Cardinal Sfeir did not indicate whether he believed Lebanon's Christians had reached the point legitimate violence, but his statement, five years after the community emerged defected and di-

vided from Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, surprised observers.

The Synod of Lebanese Bishops also said the return of peace to Lebanon should mean "a return to strict respect for human rights," it asked the government to stop what the bishops said were arbitrary arrests, and to abolish torture and free political prisoners.

The synod's calls got a cool reception from some Muslim spiritual leaders.

TV to screen Rabin killing video; court opens assassin's trial today

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Private Israeli television announced Monday that it would broadcast for the first time a video showing the murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to coincide with the opening Tuesday of his assassin's trial.

Yigal Amir, a young Jewish radical who boasted that he gunned down Mr. Rabin as an act of "divine justice" to kill the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, is scheduled to appear before a three-judge tribunal Tuesday on charges of premeditated murder.

The 25-year-old law student and anti-peace activist was arrested seconds after the shooting and faces life in prison. A special cell has already been reserved for him in the high-security section of Beersheba prison in the desert.

He faces a separate charge of "conspiracy against the state" in another trial set to begin early next year which includes his brother Hagai, 27, and a Jewish settler, Dror Hadani, 23, both accused of Israel Radio.

He predicted the head of the Shin Bet — known only by the Hebrew initial of his name, KAF — would be forced to resign.

The justice ministry said warnings were being issued to give the recipients time to prepare for when the committee resumes its hearings on Dec. 31.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who succeeded Mr. Rabin, appointed the three-man commission of inquiry led by former Chief Justice Meir Shamgar to investigate the security lapse which allowed Amir to shoot Mr. Rabin in the back at close range.

Asked to comment on the warnings on Monday, Mr. Peres told reporters: "We are a country that respects the law. There is an investigating committee. Whatever they will say I shall respect. I don't have any additions and I don't have any changes."

The Shin Bet, founded with the creation of the state in 1948, is responsible for preventing hostile secret activity.

Channel Two television said it had purchased the only known images of the actual killing and planned to broadcast the film despite efforts by the commission investigating the assassination to prevent it being made public.

Israel Radio said the video would be shown Tuesday evening, but the network president, Shalom Kitai, said only that the images would be broadcast during prime-time before Friday.

Channel Two reportedly paid \$300,000 for the broadcast rights to an unidentified amateur cameraman who shot the video, but network executives refused to confirm the sum.

The film was shot from the roof of a shopping centre located next to the parking lot where Mr. Rabin was gunned down on Nov. 4 as he left a giant peace rally.

The video was turned over to the investigating commission a month ago and is also

to be shown as evidence at the trial.

Journalists and others who have seen the 80-minute video say it clearly shows the moment when Amir walked up and shot Mr. Rabin twice in the back at point-blank range.

Investigators said the film sequence underscores the total breakdown in security surrounding the prime minister.

At one point before the shooting, Amir can be seen chatting with an agent of the Shin Bet internal security service responsible for Mr. Rabin's protection.

Rafi Reshef, a Channel Two journalist who viewed the video, said it showed the parking lot where Mr. Rabin was shot and that it was clear anyone could have entered the zone.

Draconian security was meanwhile being prepared Monday around the Tel Aviv District Court where Amir will be tried, police sources said.

Juppe is chastened as France returns to work

PARIS (Agencies) — France returned to work Monday after three weeks of strike paralyzing which observers say

for the unions," said the daily *Liberation*, under the headline "Juppe: The Social Apprentice."

The comments came as the country's trains, metros and buses continued to lurch back into action after railworkers voted to end strike action which escalated into France's worst social crisis since the May 1968 revolts.

For the first time in three weeks commuters, who for the last 20 days have faced gridlocks, long hikes or simply stayed at home, were able to travel to work in relative comfort. Trains built up around Paris, but nowhere near the scale of the record monster snarl-ups of the last three weeks.

The SNCF national rail authority said 50-60 per cent of services were running nationwide. All Paris' metro lines were running, as were the Eurostar express trains to

London and Brussels. All public transport in Paris was free.

Some areas remained blocked by workers continuing the strike, notably in Marseilles and Bordeaux where Mr. Juppe is mayor. But in general the country was returning to normal in time for Christmas, which many had feared would be disastrously hit.

Unions, however, are vowing to maintain the pressure on Mr. Juppe, looking in particular to the "social summit" Thursday at which Mr. Juppe will broach broad issues of employment, including cutting working hours and youth job creation.

One key union behind the strike, the communist-led CGT, has called for nationwide demonstrations Tuesday to press home the anger at Mr. Juppe's plans.

Column 10

Red tape robs 'away-from-home' cosmonauts of vote

MOSCOW (R) — Two Russian cosmonauts orbiting the Earth aboard the Mir space station were unable to vote in Sunday's parliamentary elections because they failed to meet new tougher rules for away-from-home voters. Interfax News Agency quoted Russia's Space Flight Centre outside Moscow as saying that the cosmonauts lost their vote when parliament failed to renew rules issuing special cards to voters intending to be away from their district on polling day. The two cosmonauts, Sergei Avdeyev and Yuri Gidzenko, blasted off from the Baikonur Space Centre last Sept. 3 and are due to return to Earth on Feb. 29, more than a month later than originally planned. A German cosmonaut, Thomas Reiter, is also on board the station.

Britain's 'most dangerous pub' to close

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